

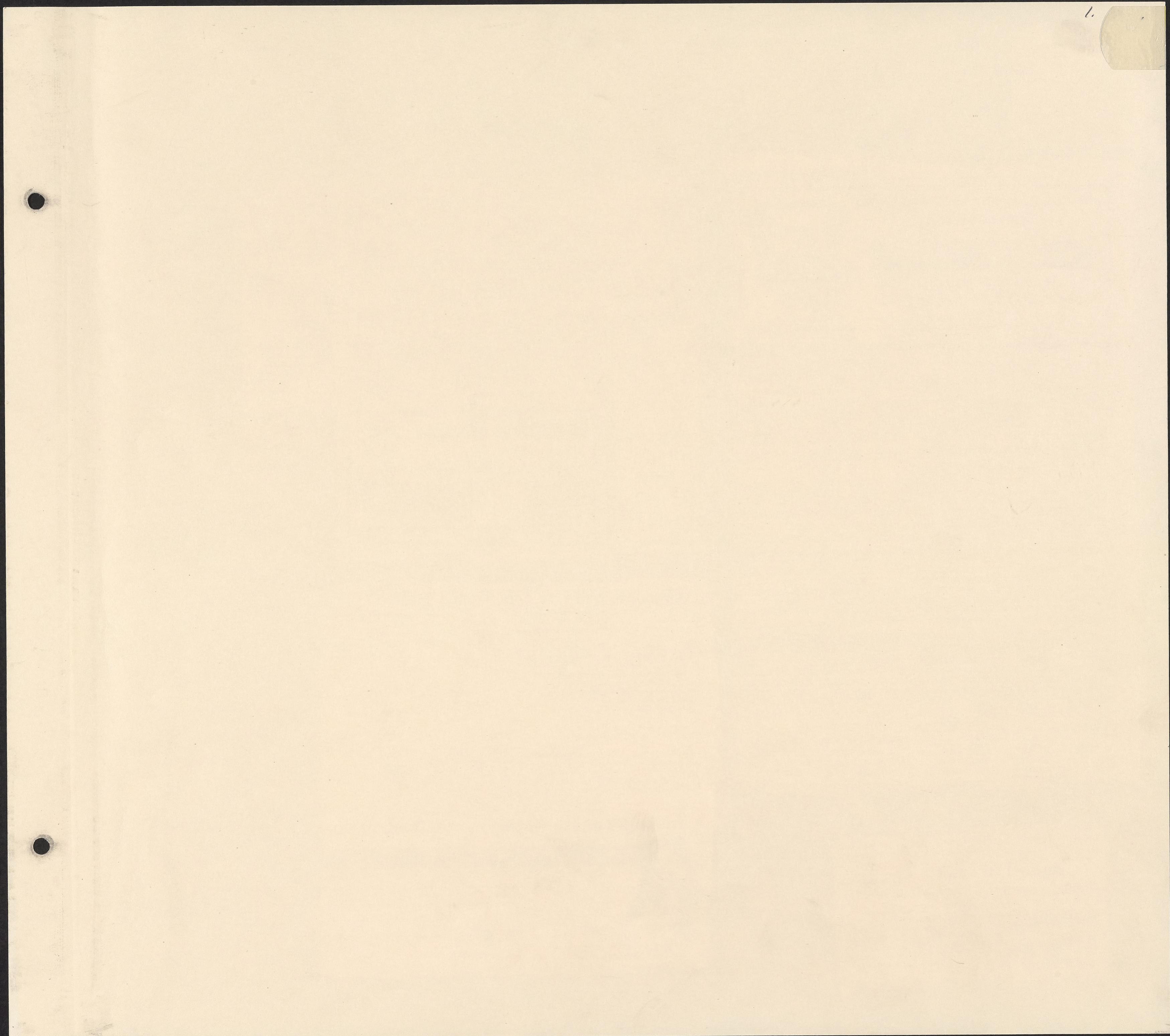


Pittsfield (MA) Parks Department Scrapbooks

Scanned through a Pittsfield Community
Preservation Act Grant 2021



**Pittsfield Parks
Department
Scrapbook
2000**



PITTSFIELD: Registration for the Pittsfield Winter Carnival Family Day Ice Fishing Derby will begin at 6:30 a.m. this Sunday at the Controy Pavilion at Burbank Park, Onota Lake. The event will end at 2. Prizes will be awarded in many age categories.

Registration for all other Family Day events will be at 11. Information: Department of Community Services, Parks and Recreation at 499-9343. *1/19/00*

The Pittsfield Gazette January 20, 2000

Carnival opens with free family day

continued from page 1
on Sunday at Burbank Park.

"Things are looking good," says committee treasurer Clark Nicholls. "A blizzard in the next day or two would be nice but we'll deal with what we have."

The festival is organized by the volunteer Winter Sports Committee, but sponsored by the city's parks department.

The free Family Day extravaganza begins at 11 a.m. at Burbank Park with games and friendly competitions on the grounds — and on the frozen expanse of Onota Lake.

Recent family days have drawn hundreds of winter revelers, many of whom leave rosy cheeked but smiling.

Activities include sled, skating and snowshoe races; horseshoes on ice; kite flying; snow sculpturing (if Mother Nature provides sufficient snow), and golf-on-ice.

In addition to winter sports, a magician will perform and a local artist will create ice sculptures. Other traditional favorite activities include hot air balloon rides — again depending on weather conditions — and hayrides. Organizers also hope to feature dog sled rides for children.

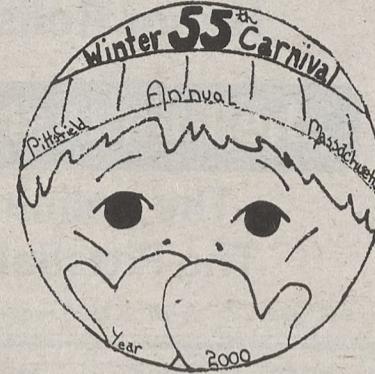
"There is a lot for kids to do," Nicholls said. "Pretty much all of the winter sports. I think we have a great program."

Family Day revelers can also meet the Winter Carnival Queen contestants, who will be on hand to sell specially designed buttons — at two for one dollar — to help pay carnival expenses.

This year marks the Winter Carnival's 55th anniversary. The tradition has survived through the years, Nicholls believes, because of its focus on free, family activities. "In the early days of the Winter Carnival," Nicholls says, "there wasn't as much to do in the winter. This was a way to get people out of the house."

Even with a plethora of winter activities available, families still enjoy getting together to slide around in the snow, and then warm up with a cup of hot chocolate.

The festival has also survived primarily because of a dedicated group of volunteers who wrestle with the



old; scheduled for February 5 at Bousquet Ski area

• Cross Country Ski races — open to all ages, scheduled for Sunday, February 6, probably at Canterbury Farm ski touring area in Becket.

• Automobile Ice Time Trials — cars race on a 1-1.5 mile slalom course on the frozen surface of Onota Lake; scheduled for Saturday and Sunday February 12 and 13; entry fee of \$20.

• Pittsfield Short Track Speed Skating Championships — held at the Vietnam Veterans Skating Rink in North Adams, scheduled for Saturday, February 19 starting at noon.

• Anything Goes Sled Races — as the name implies, racers of all ages can slide down the Clapp Park slope on anything from a cardboard box to a bathtub — or anything else that can be dragged to the top of the hill.

The Winter Carnival Queen contest provides the event's sparkle. The contest officially began this past Sunday, with 16 contestants earning eligibility by selling at least 1,000 carnival buttons.

The selection of a Carnival Queen will take place on Friday February 18 at the "Queen's Coronation Ball" at the Itam Lodge. Judges make a selection based on poise, appearance, personality, expression and understanding of Winter Carnival activities.

Queen contest chairperson Laurie Mantegari enjoys the competition. "I love the girls, I love the excitement of it," she said.

Mantegari added that most contestants truly embrace the carnival's community spirit. "They are off and running," she said. "They really get involved."

Each queen contestant receives a bag of gifts donated by local merchants, banks and the Winter Sports Committee. The queen will receive a \$1,000 scholarship and the lady-in-waiting will receive a \$500 scholarship.

The contestants can also win prizes based on the number of buttons they sell — which is not related to the queen judging. The contestant who sells the most buttons will receive \$100 for every 1,000 buttons sold.

For more information on Winter Carnival events, contact the city's parks department at 499-9343.

1/20/00

Local speed skaters in regional races

Pittsfield Parks and Recreation speed skating club members Mary Lou DiNicola and Ed Basinski each took first place in the women's and men's Masters (over 60 years) Divisions at the Eastern States Short Track Speed Skating Championships held on Nov. 11-12 in Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

DiNicola was first in the 500, 777, 1000, and 1500-meter events. Basinski took first in the 500 and 777 meters, and was second in the 1000 and 1500 meters.

At the Bay State championships on Nov. 18, in Walpole, Colin Flynn took first place in the boys' peeewee division, with wins in the 111, 222, and 333 meter events.

Basinski was second overall, with a first-place finish in the 1000 meters and second-place efforts in the 500 and 777 meters.

Terra Lampiasi placed fourth overall in the junior women's class, finishing fourth in the 500, 777, and the 1500-meter events. *1/20/00*



Shannon DeCelle / Berkshire Eagle Staff *1/19/00*

Sliding into 2000

Sisters, from left, Heather Walger, 11, Amanda Walger, 12, and Meagan Chapman, 15, get ready to slide down the man made snow at Clapp Park New Year's Eve.



Sixteen young women are vying to become this year's Winter Carnival Queen. The contestants include (back row from left to right) Megan Czerwinski, Jessica Powers, Kimberly Enright, Nicole Cote, Sarah Maddalena, Amy Bainbridge, Alyssa Hinkell.

(Middle row from left to right) Amanda Busch, Jessie Virgilio, Wendy Gero, Shana Metzger, Jenny Lemberg, Meryn Boraski, Stephanie Gallagher.

(Front row from left to right) Mayra De Medeiros, 1999 Lady-in-Waiting Becky Hashim, 1999 Queen Rachael Plaine, Erin Falco.

Carnival opens with family day

Suddenly, it feels like winter. Instead of grumbling about the sudden emergence of snow and chilly air, say members of the Pittsfield Winter Sports Committee, why not celebrate it? *1/20/00*

The Winter Carnival — Pittsfield's month-long salute to the season — is underway. In fact, the carnival's premier event, Family Day, will take place *See CARNIVAL page 15* *1/20/00*

Toboggan races set for Sunday at Osceola Park

PITTSFIELD — The Pittsfield Winter Sports Committee has announced that the annual toboggan races will be held this Sunday at Osceola Park on Gale Avenue. A rope tow will be available to return to the top of the hill.

If conditions are not adequate, the event will be held at Clapp Park on West Housatonic Street. This event is part of the 55th annual Pittsfield Winter Carnival.

Registration will be from 11 to 12:30 with timed runs starting at noon. Participants are encouraged to arrive early for practice. The event is free; there is no entry fee.

There are categories for two, three and four-person toboggans in all ages. Toboggans are available for loan, but participants may bring their own. Only wooden u-shaped toboggans are allowed.

A special trophy awarded as part of the four-person category is the Terry Donnelly Memorial Cup. If the same four-person team wins two years in a row, they keep the trophy, now on display at the Pittsfield Police Station. Trophies will be awarded after the timed runs.

Information: Ron Przedpelski, toboggan race chairman, at 443-1517 or Department of Community Services, Parks and Recreation at 499-9343.

Learn-to-Skate program planned

PITTSFIELD — The Pittsfield Parks Speed Skating Club in conjunction with the Department of Community Services, Parks and Recreation will conduct their annual Learn-to-Skate program beginning Tuesday, Dec. 26.

The program will run from Tuesday through Friday, Dec. 26 through 29, and will be held from 11:45 to 12:45 at the Pittsfield Boys' and Girls' Club rink on Melville Street.

Skaters are required to wear helmets, gloves and knee and elbow pads. They should dress warmly but avoid loose, baggy clothes and long scarves. No double runner skates are permitted. Skaters must be at least 5 years of age.

Registration will be Tuesday, Dec. 12, from 6 to 7 p.m. at the skating rink. Cost of the program

is \$15 Tuesday and \$17 thereafter, if space is available. Eighty skaters will be accepted.

For late registrations: Department of Parks and Recreation at 499-9343.

Carnival continues with auto trials on Onota Lake

Automobiles will dot Onota Lake this weekend during the 43rd annual automobile ice time trials, part of Pittsfield's 55th Annual Winter Carnival. The event is held in cooperation with the Sports Car Club of America, Mohawk Hudson Region.

The competition, open to licensed drivers only, will feature all types of automobiles. Registration starts at 9 a.m. on both Saturday and Sunday at the Controy Pavilion at Burbank Park off Lakeway Drive (enter from Pecks Road). Times runs will begin at 11 a.m. with course familiarization at 9:30 a.m. Each day is a completely separate event.

The event is a test of driving skills

on ice, and since each car runs separately, there is no danger of collision. The winding course is approximately 1 to 1.5 miles long.

Trophies will be awarded for the top third of each class. The classes are—with each class duplicated for

studded tires include: front engine with rear wheel drive or with front wheel drive, rear engine with rear wheel drive, 4 wheel drive and specialized vehicle classes. Entry fee is \$20. Dave Kosla is event chairman. For information call 499-9343.



Photo by Jim Marby / Shartrand Photography

Contestants for 2000 Winter Carnival queen pose with last year's queen and lady-in-waiting. From left are, front row: Mayra DeMedeiros, 1999 lady-in-waiting Becky Hashim, 1999 queen Rachael Plaine, Erin Falco; second row: Amanda Busch, Jessie Virgilio, Wendy Gero, Shana Metzger, Jenny Lemberg, Meryn Boraski, Stephanie Gallagher; third row: Megan Czerwinski, Jessica Powers, Kimberly Enright, Nicole Cote, Sarah Maddalena, Amy Bainbridge, Alyssa Hinkell.

ber of the Citizens Scholarship Fund Committee. She plans to attend college and to major in English.

Jenny Lemberg, 17, daughter of Joan E. Wrinn of Pittsfield and the late Alan W. Lemberg. A senior at St. Joseph's High School, she is involved in peer education, and the student and senior class councils. She is also yearbook editor, co-director of the school's community service program, and a member of the soccer, basketball and softball teams. She plans to attend college in the fall and to pursue a career in law and politics.

Jessica A. Powers, 17, daughter of Hugh and Cheryl Powers of Becket. A senior at St. Joseph's High School, she is a member of

the Rotary Interact Club, Peer Education and National Honor Society. She volunteers with the Multiple Sclerosis Walkathon and Special Olympics. She is a certified nurses' aide and has been accepted to Cedar Crest College, where she plans to pursue a career as a forensic psychologist.

Jessie Virgilio, 17, daughter of James and Donna Virgilio of Pittsfield. A senior at Taconic High School, she participates in cross country running and softball. She is also vice president of Berkshires Youth United and secretary of the senior class, and enjoys snowboarding. She plans to attend college and possibly pursue a career in orthodontics.

Pittsfield toboggan races are Sunday

The Pittsfield Winter Sports Committee will hold its annual toboggan races on Sunday at Osceola Park. The event is part of the 55th annual Pittsfield Winter Carnival.

Registration is free, and will take place from 11 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. Information: Pittsfield Parks Department, 499-9343.

Perfect ice seemed probable for the North American Outdoor Speedskating meet in Pittsfield set for this weekend, which posed a big headache for Park Superintendent Jackson J. Perry. The "headache" being keeping the spectators off the Onota Lake ice near Camp Winadu. According to Perry, the ice was "perfect, even better than we had two years ago at Clapp Park." 2/1/00

City speed skating club sets agenda

The Pittsfield Parks Speed Skating Club will conduct a carwash on Saturday at the Pep Boys Automotive Center at 680 Merrill Road in Pittsfield from 10 to 2. Club members should contact Juraye Pierson at 442-0241 to arrange times to cover the event.

On Sunday, the club will hold a dry training session at Clapp Park from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Bill Eisesmeyer, who represents the Connecticut Speed Skating Association, will conduct the session.

The organizational meeting for the club will be held Tuesday, Sept. 26 at the Department of Parks and Recreation office at 874 North St.

Dues will be collected and any loaned or rented equipment should be returned at this time.

Information: Ed Basinski (442-7541) or Pat Peaslee (443-3466).

Snow sculptures to be contest focus

PITTSFIELD — The Pittsfield Winter Sports Committee has announced that its Snow Sculpture Contest will start this Saturday and continue through Saturday, Jan. 22.

Providing that snow falls, participants can build a snow sculpture in their yard. They may then call the Department of Community Services, Parks and Recreation at 499-9343 at which time information will be taken as to the location of the sculpture.

The sculpture will be photographed for later judging.

Cash prizes will be awarded for first, second and third places. Winners will be judged by the Winter Carnival Queen contestants and will be distributed at the 55th annual Winter Carnival Family Day to be held at Onota Lake on Sunday, Jan. 23.

Information: Pittsfield Department of Community Services, Parks and Recreation, 499-9343.

Youth Sports

Skiing

Pittsfield Winter Carnival cross country ski results held at Canterbury Farm Ski Center

Female 15 and under: Alyssa Sessions, Plainfield.

Female age 16-19: Celia Thorne, Dalton.

Female age 30-39: Hilary Greene, Williamstown.

Female age 40-49: Barb Markessinis, Becket.

Child Fun Race: Rita Marcotte, Heath.

Male 15 and under: Cullen Case, Washington.

Male age 16-19: Matt Kelly, Windsor.

Male age 30-39: Kurt Kuehnel, Dalton.

Male age 40-49: Joe Shaw, Worthington.

Male age 50-59: Ed Bond, Washington.

Pittsfield Winter Carnival city ski meet held at Bousquet Ski Area.

Top 3 finishers

Boys' age 11-13: 1. Ryan Cowan, Pittsfield; 2. Adam Killeen, Pittsfield; 3. Ian Hurley, Pittsfield.

Boys' age 7 and under: 1. Kiernan O'Malley, Richmond; 2. Andy Ringler, Richmond; 3. Trevor Quirk, Pittsfield.

Boys' age 8-10: 1. Kyle Storie, Pittsfield; 2. Joe Martin, Richmond; 3. Travis Killeen, Pittsfield.

Girls' age 11-13: 1. Rebecca Kosla, Pittsfield; 2. Juliana Brune, Washington.

Girls' age 7 and under: 1. Abigail McDermott, Pittsfield; 2. Molly Masiero, Richmond; 3. Sarah Pero, Pittsfield.

Girls' age 8-10: 1. Alyssa Duane, Pittsfield; 2. Briana Flynn, Pittsfield; 3. Hanna Plager, Pittsfield.

Girls' age 11-13: 1. Laura Carchedi, Pittsfield; 2. Dana Connor, Pittsfield; 3. Megan Negrini, Pittsfield.

1/10/00

Winter Carnival Queen contestants sought

Applications are being accepted for the 2001 Winter Carnival Queen

February 16 at the ITAM Lodge. The sale of the buttons is a separate contest and has no bearing on the judging of the queen and the lady-in-waiting, who are chosen by a panel of judges in the format of accumulating scores in various areas.

Scholarships will be awarded to the Queen and the Lady-in-Waiting, along with special gifts. Miss Congeniality, to be selected by the queen contestants the night of the ball, and the contestant selling the most buttons will receive special gifts.

Each contestant must sell a minimum of 1,000 Carnival buttons to be eligible for judging at the Queen's Coronation Ball, to be held Friday, January 20.

Community College.

They are also available at the Springside House, 874 North Street, weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. There is a limit of 16 contestants.

The deadline for filing applications is Friday, December 29, 2000 at 3 p.m. Applicants are asked to hand-deliver their applications to the Springside House on weekdays between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Co-chairs of this year's Queen Contest and Coronation Ball are Tina Melle, Julie Salatino and Melissa Barnaby.

Applications for those interested in competing are available in the city high schools and at Berkshire Community College.

12/14/00

The Berkshire Eagle, Wednesday, December 27, 2000 — B5

Schedule listed for 2001 Winter Carnival

PITTSFIELD — The Pittsfield Winter Sports Committee Inc. of the Department of Community Services, Parks and Recreation has announced its 56th annual Winter Carnival, which provides winter activities for people of all ages.

The following is a schedule of the events that make up this year's carnival. Most activities are held outdoors and are free of charge.

Extreme weather conditions may cause change or cancellation.

Home Snow Sculpture Contest — Saturday, Jan. 6, through Saturday, Jan. 20. Families or groups of individuals are to notify the Parks Department when their sculpture is completed and a judge will inspect and photograph the sculpture and choose a winner based on the pictures taken. The winners will be announced at Family Day.

Winter Carnival Queen Contest — Sunday, Jan. 14, to Sunday, Feb. 11. The event is open to girls 17-21 years of age who live, attend school or work in Pittsfield or an adjoining town. Each contestant must sell a minimum of 1,000 Winter Carnival buttons to qualify. A maximum of 16 girls may enter, and the first 16 qualified applicants submitted are accepted.

Application forms are available at the Pittsfield high schools, Berkshire Community College and at the Parks Department offices at Springside House, 874 North St. The contest culminates with the Queen's Coronation Ball, where the winning contestant and the lady-in-waiting are crowned.

are not adequate, the event will be held at Clapp Park on West Housatonic Street.

City Downhill Slalom Ski Meet — Saturday, Feb. 3. The competition for youngsters under the age of 13 will be held at Bousquet Ski Area. Each entrant has at least two runs down the hill; best time counts toward trophies. Registrations begin at 9 a.m. with racing at 10.

Family Day — Sunday, Jan. 21. The event begins at 11 a.m. at the newly renovated Controy Pavilion on the shore of Onota Lake. Participants can meet the queen contestants and purchase carnival buttons.

Activities include sled, skating and snowshoe races, horseshoes on ice, kite flying, snow sculpting, and ice-fishing and golf-on-ice competitions.

Tethered hot air balloon rides (50-100 foot vertical ascent) for the kids will be available and are dependent on wind conditions. Horsedrawn hay wagon rides are provided throughout the afternoon.

Also included will be face painting and magician demonstrations. A wood-stove heated pavilion is available as well as warm and cold refreshments. Entry to all activities is free with the exception of the ice fishing derby.

Winter Carnival Queen Contest — Sunday, Jan. 14, to Sunday, Feb. 11. The event is open to girls 17-21 years of age who live, attend school or work in Pittsfield or an adjoining town. Each contestant must sell a minimum of 1,000 Winter Carnival buttons to qualify. A maximum of 16 girls may enter, and the first 16 qualified applicants submitted are accepted.

Registration begins at 11 a.m.; timed runs start at noon. This event is scheduled at Osceola Park on Gale Avenue. If conditions

are not adequate, the event will be held at Clapp Park on West Housatonic Street.

City Downhill Slalom Ski Meet — Saturday, Feb. 3. The competition for youngsters under the age of 13 will be held at Bousquet Ski Area. Each entrant has at least two runs down the hill; best time counts toward trophies. Registrations begin at 9 a.m. with racing at 10.

Cross Country Ski Races — Sunday, Feb. 4. The event is open to people of all ages and is held at Canterbury Farm Ski Touring area on Fred Snow Road in Becket. Registration starts at 9 a.m.

Automobile Ice Time Trials — Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 10 and 11. A 1-1.5 mile slalom course is set up on the frozen surface of Onota Lake, and headquartered at the Controy Pavilion on the Peck's Road end of Lakeway Drive. The event is open to all licensed drivers with automobiles equipped with seat belts. Helmets are required and loaner helmets will be available.

Loaner cars may be available at an additional cost to cover fuel expenses. Registration begins at 8 a.m. each day; timed runs start by 11. Entry is \$20 per entrant. The number of entrants will be limited to 100 or less, depending on weather conditions.

Toboggan Races — Sunday, Jan. 28. People of all ages may compete in 2-, 3- and 4-person categories. Toboggans are supplied, but participants can bring their own. Registration begins at 11 a.m.; timed runs start at noon. This event is scheduled at Osceola Park on Gale Avenue. If conditions

are not adequate, the event will be held at Clapp Park on West Housatonic Street.

Short Track Speed Skating Championships — Saturday, Feb. 24. The Pittsfield Speed Skating Club of the Department of Community Development, Parks and Recreation will host the event which begins at noon at the Vietnam Veterans Skating Rink in North Adams. There is an entry fee and entrants are members of the Amateur Speedskating Union. There is no fee for spectators.

Meetings for the event are held on Wednesday evenings at 7 during January and February at the Springside House on upper North Street if anyone is interested in helping.

For event location directions and other information, call 499-9343 weekdays from 9 to 4.



Joel Librizzi/Berkshire Eagle Staff
12/28/00

Look out below!

From left, Amanda Martinez, Josie Miller and Jessica Warman head downhill yesterday on a tube at Clapp Park in Pittsfield. Staffers at Girls Inc. brought kids to the park yesterday for some outdoor fun.

Consultants say many factors impact Springside watershed

The replacement of a dam, possible dredging of two ponds and the rerouting of nature trail traffic are among the ideas surfacing as a watershed study advances at Springside Park.

The city and state have co-funded a \$15,000 study concentrating on the area around the ponds at the 130-acre site.

Consultants Bob Mellstrom and John Saydek outlined preliminary findings during a parks commission meeting Monday attended by more than one dozen Springside advocates.

Mellstrom said it's clear that the dam at the park's "lower" pond has outlived its effectiveness.

"It's deteriorated to the point it has to be replaced," he said.

Options on whether to dredge the two ponds—partially or completely—are more varied. While avoiding a position at this point, Mellstrom seemed to lean toward partial silt removal within one area.

He noted that the ponds were manmade and have unusual—and environmentally questionable—characteristics such as a concrete-lined wading area.

Mellstrom also said that it's important for the integrity of the watershed to better control vehicular use of the park's many trails and unofficial roadways.

"You should close off some trails so these trails don't get so eroded," he said.

The consultant displayed several boards with photographs documenting problems at the park and possible solutions. Wide gravel access roads lead to erosion into the wetlands, he noted, while the presence of unauthorized ramps for all-terrain vehicles suggest that sections of the park are being used for environmentally destructive activities.

Also noting the presence of dumping of unidentified waste, the consultant urged commissioners "to consider future restrictions of [vehicular] access."

Elizabeth Kulas, a member of one of the park's nature groups, concurred. "What you said makes a lot of sense."

Jim McGrath, another park advocate, said the final report should focus on "giving better direction on how to maintain the park and the dirt roads" to incorporate watershed issues.

Saydek, the other consultant, outlined amenities and design enhancements that could be made to the park.

He advocates trying to direct most foot and other traffic in the park onto specific, less steep trails. He also suggested planting new trees near Springside Avenue and adding features ranging from picnic tables and trash receptacles to a restored pond bridge and a fountain.

Kulas expressed skepticism about artificial enhancements such as a fountain. "I'd like to see it 'state parkified' rather than 'Disneyfied'."

Another park advocate, Nancy

Eppley, said that the natural environment of Springside is its greatest asset. "The Friends of Springside Park was formed to oppose golf course plans and other changes," she said.

Judy Gitelson offered similar caution regarding Saydek's mention of additional parking near Springside

Avenue. "Be careful of how much parking we put in," she said. "There's already a lot of asphalt [in the city]."

Community services director Bob Mellace said that the final report should provide a blueprint for possible future efforts.

"It's probably going to be piece-

meal," he said. "I don't want to give such as utilizing help from the a false impression of this as a pie-in-the-sky proposal."

Mellace said that dredging, even if deemed desirable, may prove too costly. On the other hand, nature trail improvements could be accomplished in less expensive fashion,

such as utilizing help from the Americorps service program.

Mellstrom said that the final report, expected by the end of January, will give projected costs for different features such as the dam repair, dredging and nature trail enhance-

★ The Berkshire Eagle, Thursday, February 3, 2000 — C3

Winter Sports Committee announces race schedule

PITTSFIELD — The Pittsfield Winter Sports Committee has scheduled its downhill ski race for Saturday at Bousquet Ski Area and its annual cross country ski race for Sunday at Canterbury Farm Ski Touring Center on Fred Snow Road in Becket.

The downhill race is open to area children ages five through 13, and there will be categories for trained and nontrained racers in several age and gender divisions. Trophies will be presented to first- through fifth-place finishers.

The course will be an easy open slalom and racers will be allowed two runs, the best time used for trophy position.

Registration forms are available at Springside House, 874 North St. until tomorrow. Registration at Bousquet will begin at 9 a.m. in the lower lobby and continue until the race begins at 10 a.m.

There is no entry fee but racers will need to have a parent or guardian available for consent signature. Free hot chocolate and hot dogs will be available in the restaurant.

Information: Call 684-3050 or 499-9343.

Cross country

Registration for the cross country race will begin at 9 a.m. with the race beginning at 10.

No prior registration will be accepted.

The children's Fun Race will be a one-kilometer event while the five-kilometer freestyle race is open to all ages. Trophy prizes will be awarded following both races in the ski lodge. Information: 499-7697 or 499-9343.

Winter carnival button design winners named

Dan Malacarne, a Taconic High School Senior, has won the 2001 Winter Carnival button design contest. His design was chosen from more than 280 entries submitted to the Winter Sports Committee by children from the city's elementary, middle and high schools.

The button depicts the Winter Carnival Queen on a toboggan followed by a snowman on another toboggan.

Other category winners include: Nicole Chaves, Egremont School; Ricardo Hutchinson, St. Mark Middle School; Anna Rennie, St. Mark Middle School; and Elizabeth Rogers, Taconic High School.

The button design grand prize is a \$100 Berkshire Mall Gift certificate.

The contest is sponsored by the Pittsfield Winter Sports Committee Inc. of the Department of Community Services/Parks and Recreation. Buttons are sold by Winter Carnival Queen contestants and proceeds help pay for Carnival events. Buttons will go on sale Sunday January 14.

Automobile time trials scheduled for Onota

The Pittsfield Winter Carnival automobile ice time trials will take place Saturday and Sunday on Onota Lake. The 43rd annual event is being sponsored by the Pittsfield Winter Sports Committee, the Pittsfield Department of Community Services and the city Department of Parks and Recreation.

The time trials are part of the 55th annual Winter Carnival. The event will be held in cooperation with the Sports Car Club of America, Mohawk Hudson Region and is sanctioned as a Rallycross.

The competition is open to licensed drivers and all types of automobiles. Registration begins at 9 on both days at the Controy Pavilion at Burbank Park. Timed runs will begin at 11 with course familiarization set for 9:30. Each day is considered a separate event.

The event is a test of driving skills on ice with cars driving on the estimated one-mile long course alone.

Trophies will be awarded in four categories. Helmets (loaners are available) must be worn and seatbelts used. The entry fee is \$20. Information: 499-9343.

Pittsfield speed skaters win meet in N. Adams

NORTH ADAMS — The Pittsfield Parks Speed Skating Club captured the Pittsfield Team title on Saturday at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Rink. The local club won the event with a total of 99 points. The Bay State Club, from the Boston area, placed second.

Capturing division titles for the local team were Caroline Holland (juvenile girls), Mary Lou DiNicola (master women), Ed Basinski (master men) and Collin Flynn (Pee wee boy).

Three winning efforts

Holland had first-place finishes in the 333-, 500- and 1,000-meter races. DiNicola was first in the 500, 1,000 and 1,500 events. Basinski was first in the 500, 1,000 and 1,500 while Flynn was first in the 111, 222 and 333 races.

Others scoring for the local

team included Vinnie Malone, who was second in the 500 and 1,000 in the masters men and Jaryn Pierson, who was third in the 333, 777 and 500 races in the pony boy class.

Peterson garners three thirds

Tierra Peterson was third in the 222, 500 and 777 events in the pony girl class while Terra Lampiasi had second-place finishes in the juvenile girls' races.

In the novice division, Ashley Stracuzzi was first in the 111-meter race while Gabrielle Constant had firsts in the 111 and 222 in the pony girls division. Saphire Senger-O'Leary had thirds in the 111 and 222 events while Rayelle Pierson was second in the 111- and 222-meter races.

The meet was sponsored by the Pittsfield Winter Sports Committee.

2/3/00
Snowy stunt



Skating club to sponsor speed skating championships

1/17/00

PITTSFIELD — The Pittsfield Parks Speed Skating Club, in conjunction with the Pittsfield Winter Sports Committee of the Department of Community Services/Parks and Recreation, will sponsor the Pittsfield Short Track Speedskating Championships on Saturday at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Skating Rink in North Adams.

Races will begin at noon and admission is free to the public. Classes are set up according to age groups, the youngest being peewee for skaters under eight years of age and masters starting at age 30 and going up in 10-year classes.

The event, part of the 55th Pittsfield Winter Carnival, will draw skaters from throughout the eastern section of the country.

Sled races to be held at Clapp Park

1/17/00

PITTSFIELD — The Winter Sports Committee has announced that its annual Anything Goes Sled Races will be held this Sunday as part of the 55th annual Pittsfield Winter Carnival.

There will be several divisions. Age categories will range from one through 100. There will be trophy prizes for first through fifth place winners in each age category and for first through third place winners for the most uniquely designed sled.

Registration will begin at Clapp Park on West Housatonic Street at 11. Entries for ages 18 and under will require a parent or guardian's signature.

For further information: Department of Community Services, Parks and Recreation at 499-9343.

Speed Skating Championships

The Pittsfield Parks Speed Skating Club in conjunction with the Pittsfield Winter Sports Committee of the Department of Community Services/Parks and Recreation will sponsor the Pittsfield Short Track Speedskating Championships on Saturday, February 19th at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Skating Rink in North Adams.

Races begin at noon and admission is free to the public. Classes are set up according to age groups, the youngest being pee wee for skaters under eight years of age and masters starting at age 30 and going in 10-year classes. The event, part of the 55th Pittsfield Winter Carnival, will draw skaters from throughout the eastern section of the country.

1/15/00

Photos by Joel Librizzi/ Berkshire Eagle Staff

Clapp Park in Pittsfield has been the place for sledding in recent weeks after several snowstorms. Chris Shaw, 9, of Pittsfield goes airborne over a makeshift ramp he and his friends built. From top to bottom, Chris goes up, loses his tube in midair, and comes down hard but uninjured.

Queen's crowning, event stirs emotions

By Rob Colenso Jr.
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The crowning of Shana Metzger as this year's Winter Carnival queen was a particularly special moment for Laurie A. Mantegari, the chairwoman of the Queen's Contest and Coronation Ball.

But the significance wasn't solely because of Metzger's crowning; Mantegari has said during her years as the event's organizer that every contestant is a queen in her eyes.

Instead, Mantegari found it hard to hold back her tears throughout this year's coronation because it will be her fifth and final ceremony.

"I feel the need to expand in life and I'll probably be leaving the area in the next couple months," she said to the capacity crowd in attendance at the Itam Lodge Friday night as she tried to hold back her tears. "I will still help with the committee and I'll still be there ... but someone else will need to step forward."

For Mantegari, the 55th crowning of Pittsfield's Winter Carnival queen was apparently one filled with both joy and sadness.

"I've come to call them my 'Sweet 16,'" she said of the girls who have vied for queen's crown and cape in the years since Mantegari took over as contest chairwoman. "I cannot express to you how very, very special they are to me."

After a delayed start to the coronation portion of the evening gala, Shana Metzger — the 17-year-old daughter of Alan and Margery Metzger of Pittsfield — was crowned as the new Winter Carnival queen by outgoing queen Rachael Plaine.

Looking regal in an ivory lace gown, Metzger received the requisite crown and cape from Plaine and assumed her place at the Winter Carnival queen's throne as thunderous applause from the audience filled the room.

"I'm still shaking," Metzger said in a brief interview shortly after her coronation, as audience members flocked around to offer congratulations.

"It was a total surprise," she added, as she stepped onto the dance floor with her father for a dance to Michael Bolton's cover version of "When A Man Loves A Woman."

In her new role as carnival queen, the Taconic High School senior will reign over Winter Carnival events that will

Taconic High School senior Shana Metzger basks in the glory of being named the 55th annual Winter Carnival queen Friday night. In back is Jessica Powers of St. Joseph's High School. Powers was named the runner-up, or lady-in-waiting.

take place in the coming year.

And as every new queen needs a helping hand now and then, a new lady-in-waiting was also crowned Friday night. Jessica A. Powers, the 17-year-old daughter of Hugh and Cheryl Powers of Becket, was honored with a shiny crown that caught a faint green glitter from her slim-fitting hunter green gown.

Powers, a senior at St. Joseph's High School, was escorted by Kevin Brennan.

The new queen, her lady-in-waiting and the 14 other girls were presented with a variety of gifts after the coronation. Metzger received a \$1,000 college scholarship, which she hopes to use as she studies law and politics in college.

Powers also received a \$500 scholar-

ship, which she'll likely use in her time at Cedar Crest College, where she plans to pursue a career as a forensic psychologist with the FBI.

Each contestant was required to sell at least 1,000 Winter Carnival buttons to qualify for the competition, but all went above and beyond the call of button-sell-

2/20/02 QUEEN, continued on B4



Shannon DeCelle / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Queen from B1

Mantegari said during the coronation ceremony.

However, she added, only one girl can be named top button-seller and 18-year-old Meryn Boraski claimed that honor this year, selling 7,597 buttons. As the top button-seller receives \$100 in scholarship funds for every 1,000 buttons sold, the St. Joseph's senior will have a \$700 scholarship in her pocket as she heads off to Northeastern University this fall to study nursing.

In all, the 16 contestants sold 35,367 buttons this year, for a gross income of about \$17,683. The money helps to support carnival events conducted annually by the Pittsfield Winter Sports Committee, of the city's Department of Community Services, Parks and Recreation.

While the girls had no idea Friday evening who would be crowned as queen and lady-in-waiting, all but one knew going into the evening's events who would be named Miss Congeniality.

As chosen by her fellow competitors the night before, 17-year-old Sarah Maddalena learned Friday night that she had been picked as Miss Congeniality and was awarded a special remembrance along with the title. Maddalena, a senior at Taconic, will attend Siena College in Albany, N.Y., this fall, where she plans to major in education.

Contestants were judged by a three-person panel on their poise, appearance and personality.

The judging, which took place before the coronation ceremony, must have been a tough and exacting process, as it delayed the start of the gala by about 40 minutes. But despite the challenge offered by her 15 fellow competitors, Metzger earned top honors.

And for Metzger, the title of queen apparently carries some weighty responsibilities along with the Winter Carnival-related duties. Mantegari called out to Metzger immediately after the coronation, asking, "How's it feel there, new queen?"

Her response? "The crown is heavy!"

2/20/02



Crime crisis at the Common prompts varied reactions

continued from page 1

Several organizations, including Girls Incorporated, The Boys' & Girls' Club and the Head Start Program, traditionally use the Common extensively during summer months. School groups regularly visit the park as well as families.

The Common also hosts a skateboard park, which draws crowds of teens on most afternoons. Because of its central location, the park is often used by organizations for community events. It is also home to Junior League football games and a youth bicycle racing league.

But the recent high-profile incidents raise questions over whether the park is a suitable play area for young children. Baker believes that the current aversion to the Common will be temporary. The time off, she added, will allow the agency to determine whether problems at the park are isolated or an indication of a deeper situation.

"I think it's a matter of feeling things out," Baker said. "It is an inconvenience but we have to figure out what's safest for the children."

The decision to temporarily stop using the park was an easy one, Baker added. On most Friday afternoons, she said, the Girls Incorporated group would have been at the park during the time that bullets began flying. Fortunately, officials decided to stay at the facility that afternoon.

Jane Rogers, who works with the Boys & Girls' Club childcare program, said that several parents voiced anxiety over use of the park in the wake of the incidents. "We have canceled some events [at the Common]," Rogers said. "We have some very concerned parents."

While minor problems at the park have been reported recently, the violent incidents have caused parents, and even teenagers, to take a new look at the Common.

Scary incident

Kim Weed, who lives near the park, had a chilling experience on Sunday evening, when her 11-year-old son came home and said he had just watched someone get slashed with a knife.

"When he came home and said what happened, I said 'that's it, no more Common,'" Weed said. "This kind of thing happens every place else, you just don't think of it happening here."

Weed said that a small group of troublemakers congregate at the park after dark for drug dealing and other activities. "It's sad," she said. "The bad kids ruin it for everybody."

Nick Burkell said that he was standing "five or ten" feet away from Sunday's altercation. The incident started when two men walked past a group in the park, and one of the men made a comment about a woman in the group, Burkell said. Words were exchanged and other people came into the argument. The actual slashing, Burkell said, happened quickly.

"I went over and asked him if he needed an ambulance and he said 'no' and just ran away," Burkell said. "There was a really big puddle of blood."

Chris Sorenson agrees that the atmosphere changes after dark. "It's very safe during the day, but at night, the Common is not safe at all," he said. "There are a lot of fights down here."

Skateboard park

In the wake of the recent incidents, former city councilor Peter Arlos is renewing his call for relocating the skateboard park, which he believes contributes to problems because of its secluded location and appeal to teens.

Arlos has petitioned the city council to move the park to a more visible location.

"Visibility is an important element

for safety and control," he said. "The

\$36,000 facility at the Common is useless because it is hidden and therefore dangerous. Recent stabbings and shooting have vindicated my warnings of the dangers of the Common location."

Arlos noted that in April the council voted in support of moving the park. "These latest incidents should spur the [parks] commission to some remedial action," he said.

Community services director Robert Mellace said that the park commission chose the Common for the skateboard park because the property was available and suitable for the use. Mellace added that he has asked Chief Riello for a list of police response calls to the park, to better gauge whether the site has

deep-rooted problems.

Teenager Jeff Hermanski worries that city officials will overreact to recent problems and remove the skateboard park. "It's a cool place to be," he said. "Everything's kind of getting blown up [out of proportion]."

Other teens, who asked that their names not be used, said that much of the drug activity involves gang members from outside of the city, including "Crips" and "Latin Kings" members. A local gang, called "MXT Fam" also intimidates other youth, the teens said.

The police "community command center" mobile unit has been stationed at the park for several days this week, providing some measure of comfort for neighbors.



Many kids are still playing at the Common, but parents are vigilantly watching.



Photos by Shannon DeCelle / Berkshire Eagle Staff
Gail Garner, above, daughter of former Parks Superintendent Vincent Hebert, adds earth to a lilac tree as part of yesterday's Arbor Day tribute to her father at Springside Park in Pittsfield. Below, Irene Staskin sings an impromptu rendition of 'There's Always Tomorrow' in Hebert's memory.

The Pittsfield Gazette March 9, 2000

Parks hearing generates no interest, but more opportunities scheduled

Park commissioners vowed Monday to redouble efforts to solicit public input on Monday after no one spoke during the first of four planned public hearings.

Monday's session at Morningside Community School, intended to gather ideas concerning five-year goals for the park system, required patience.

Due to two absent members and a third commissioner trapped in slow-moving traffic on the Massachusetts Turnpike, the session began more than 30 minutes late.

"This is a bit ridiculous," said chairman Anthony Massimiano.

Despite the setbacks, Massimiano said the commission is serious about obtaining residents' ideas as part of a master plan update.

Boost grants

Community services director Bob Mellace said the project is intended to help create a document that "will help us get grants and set an agenda of where we want to go in the next five or seven years."

The final report will describe the community and neighborhood demographics; list all park facilities and programs; analyze needs and community recreation goals; highlight five-year objectives; and list an action plan.

Mellace said previous versions of the plan have yielded financial dividends, helping free some \$1 million in grants for park projects.

"It's nice when you're going for grants to have a detailed plan," he said. "It really buys you a lot of points."

David Hathaway of the commu-

nity development office said the parks report fits with overall city planning goals.

"It's really a coordinated effort at planning," said Hathaway. "We've seen a lot of progress and now have almost 20 years of continuity."

Massimiano said that public meetings are just one means of gathering input. Focus groups and surveys are also utilized. For example, Hathaway

said a group of high school students will receive a mailing soliciting their ideas for the parks.

The next public input meeting will be held March 20 at 7 p.m. at Conte Community School. A session will also be held April 3 at 7 p.m. at Williams School.

Massimiano said a daytime meeting at the Froio Senior Center will be held at a date to be announced.

50 Years Ago: June 19, 1950

Jackson J. Perry, 37, Pittsfield's first full-time superintendent of parks and recreation, resigned to become director of the Leominster Recreation Center. Perry had been superintendent since September 1945 and earned a salary of \$4,800 a year. He was scheduled to leave July 31.

Police probe van theft

PITTSFIELD — Pittsfield Police are investigating the apparent temporary theft of a School Department vehicle on Christmas weekend.

Capt. John T O'Neil, commander of the detective bureau, said a School Department van was found in a Springside Park maintenance garage Dec. 28 with a broken mirror and scratches on its side.

O'Neil said the van had last been used Dec. 23 and had been left parked — undamaged — in the maintenance garage where it was later found.

"There were no signs of forced entry," O'Neil said of the garage.

However, O'Neil said, "quite a few people can get in and out of there."

The investigation is being conducted by Officer Marc Maddalena.

1/4/00

City, family salute Hebert's efforts

By Greg Sukiennik
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The city remembered the contributions of the late Vincent Hebert yesterday at the arboretum bearing his name in Springside Park.

A brief Arbor Day ceremony marked the former parks and recreation superintendent's many contributions to the city's quality of life. Friends, family members and former co-workers praised Hebert and his life's work in word, song, and with the ceremonial planting of three lilac trees on the grounds; Hebert's surviving family and descendants performed the honors.

The Eagles Band played, refreshments were served, and speakers including Mayor Gerald S. Doyle Jr. and Hebert's longtime friend and colleague, John Marchesi, remembered his dedication to his job, to the community.

HEBERT, continued on B6



Department heads reappointed

Veterans' services director Larry Caprari and community services director Bob Mellace were reappointed Tuesday.

Councilors voted 10-0 to approve Mayor Gerald Doyle Jr.'s reappointments of the department heads.

Ward 6 councilor Dan Bianchi lauded the duo, "both of whom have been long-term, very good, solid public servants." Ward 1 councilor Bill Barry concurred, stating "they're always there when you need them."

Hebert from B1

ty and its youth. Hebert died a year ago at the age of 81.

Irene Staskin, the wife of former Department of Public Works employee Robert Staskin, had known Hebert since she moved to Pittsfield in 1955. When Robert Mellace, city director of community services, asked if anyone in attendance wanted to pay tribute to Hebert, Mrs. Staskin came forward and sang two songs.

"He always used to tell me, 'I'm

dreaming of a better tomorrow and a better Pittsfield,'" she said before singing "There's Always Tomorrow" from the animated special "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," as well as "April Showers."

Just when it didn't seem emo-

tions could run any higher, they did. Holding back tears, Hebert's step-grandson, Fred Garner Jr., said people know what Hebert did for the city, "but they would be proud to know the things he did for his family."

Garner, whose own father has a park named after him, now volunteers his time at the Wild Acres Conservation Area, basing that commitment on his grandfather's example. "I know what this city meant to him," he said. "He wanted it to be a better community."

It was also announced at the ceremony that a master plan study for the arboretum, one aimed at making the park a world-class example of cultivating and preserving native plants and trees, is under way.

4/27/00

Enforcement of dog laws sought

After navigating a word-choice minefield, councilors on Tuesday voted 10-0 to ask the police department to increase enforcement of ordinances regarding defecation by dogs in public places.

Matt Kerwood and Rick Scapin initiated the dialogue with a petition seeking education and enforcements.

Kerwood said the first goal is for the police "to step up enforcement of folks who allow their dogs to 'do their business' in public places."

Scapin lamented that "everywhere you go is defecation, everywhere."

Pet owners need to take initiative and be considerate of others. "City parks aren't kennels," said Scapin.

Ward 7 councilor Joe Guzzo and ward 6 councilor Dan Bianchi said that feces in parks, particularly where children play, present health consequences.

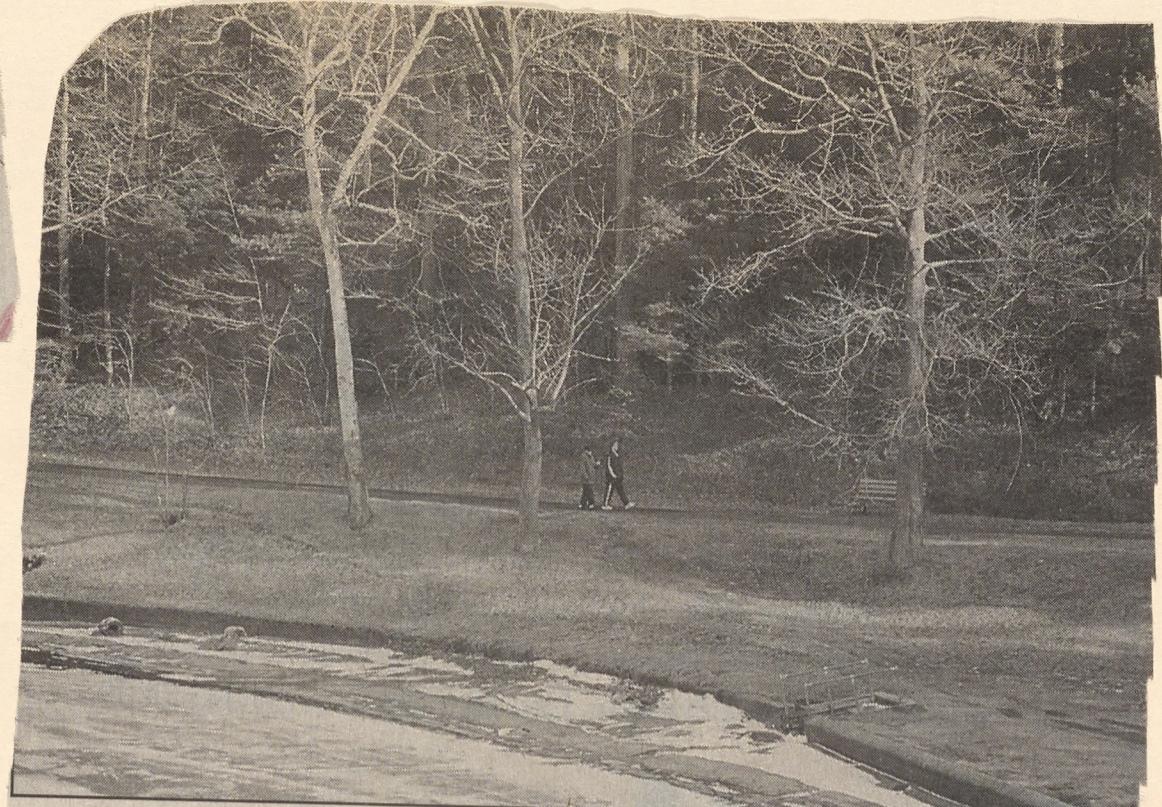
Ward 4 councilor Gary Grunin noted that last year he petitioned for installation of disposable clean up materials at parks. Scapin said the system is being tested at Burbank Park this year.

Council president Tom Hickey said the issue is genuine but that he was happy to move onto other business after councilors "literally and figuratively danced around the 'doo-doo' issue."

4/27/00

PITTSFIELD: The Department of Community Services, Parks and Recreation has announced that applications for lifeguards, playground leaders, Babe Ruth umpires and park security officers are now available at the Department of Parks and Recreation Office, 874 North St., or the personnel office at City Hall. Information: 499-9343. 5/19/00

PITTSFIELD: The Pittsfield Parks Commission reminds park users that all dogs are to be on a leash while in a city park and any deposited waste is to be cleaned up and disposed of properly. Besides being aesthetically unpleasant, pet waste can transmit diseases. "Mutt Mitts" have been installed in various city parks to assist park users in picking up after their pets. *6/17/00*



Winter stroll

An unidentified couple walk along the path at Onota Lake in Burbank Park Sunday. *1/13/00*

Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Park Square work should resume April 1

Park Square renewal efforts should resume on April 1 and could be completed by Memorial Day, according to Robert Mellace, the city's director of community services.

The \$265,000 project includes installation of new sidewalks, improved curbing, period lighting, park benches, landscaping, cleaning of all monuments and the planting of an elm tree at the location of the legendary "Pittsfield Elm."

"It's really a facelift for the park," Mellace said. "It's going to be more attractive and it will be a lot more functional as well."

Trees remain

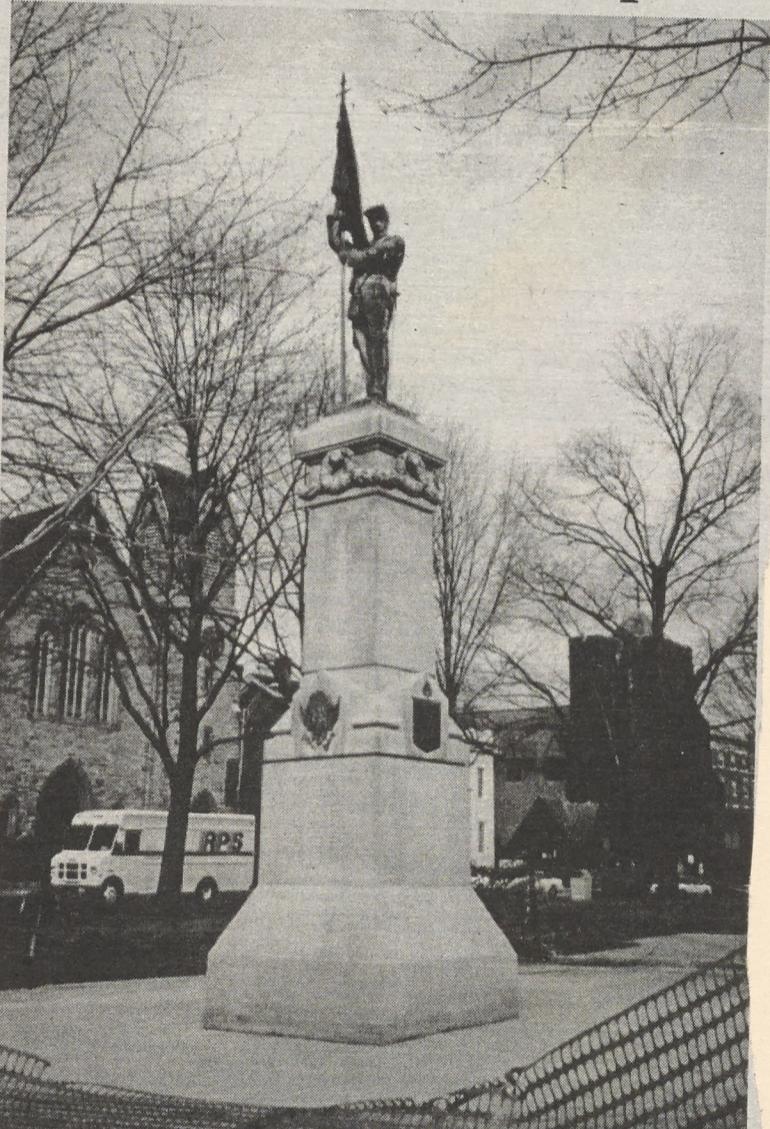
The parks commission had originally considered removing some trees at the park to open the site and make it more visible to passersby. Instead, the board opted to remove only two dying trees and "limb" others.

Mellace noted that the decision appears to have been the correct one, since many of the trees have "grown in" to one another. "If any trees were going to be cut, they should have probably been removed five or ten years ago," he said.

He noted, however, that two trees adjacent to the Civil War memorial may have to be removed, because of a grading problem.

Mellace said that, as of yet, no ceremony has been planned to mark the completion of the project but added that "I think it would be appropriate."

The project, he added, marks a major improvement to a highly symbolic city landmark.



Park Square will get attention this spring with completion of a \$265,000 refurbishment, which includes cleaning and maintenance of the city's Civil War monument. *3/19/00*

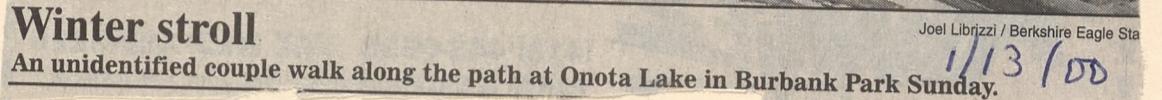
50 Years Ago: Oct. 25, 1950

Lionel O. Cota, who lost the use of both legs while on duty with the Air Force in World War II, opened a photographic studio at his Pittsfield home. The 34-year-old who learned photography while serving with the Air Force, would specialize in children's portraits at his Windsor Avenue studio.

Pittsfield's Park Square and the Community House in Dalton would each get a 25-foot evergreen tree next week. The two trees were now growing on the lawn of Harold D. Barnes of Spadina Parkway. Arrangements were being made to transplant the trees so that both locations would have permanent Christmas trees. *10/25/00*

Preserving Park Square's integrity

The \$280,000 worth of improvements to Park Square are now protected from future developmental whims under the new agreement reached between the city and the Massachusetts Historical Commission. In exchange for a \$140,000 preservation projects grant, the city, in addition to agreeing to maintain the park, can only make alterations that do not affect the "architectural, archeological or historical integrity of the park," which is on the State Register of Historical Places. At a time when "urban uglification" too often seems to be a fact of life in other cities, such as Albany or Holyoke, it is refreshing to see a legal barrier put up in Pittsfield to prevent an important piece of downtown from yielding to the kind of fast-buck thinking which usually only speeds up decay. *4/17/00*



Well groomed

Berkshire Snowseekers provided grooming for the hill at Clapp Park in Pittsfield as the man-made snow had become icy. The Snowcat's driver was Rich Cartier. *1/11/00*

Ben Garver / Berkshire Eagle Staff

The Berkshire Eagle, Wednesday, January 12, 2000 — B3

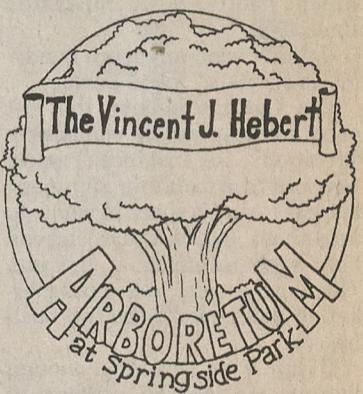
Group forms to oversee the Hebert Arboretum

PITTSFIELD — Hebert Arboretum, a volunteer organization formed in December to plan and develop the Vincent J. Hebert Arboretum at Springside Park, yesterday announced it has formed a board of directors, elected officers and filed for incorporation with the Massachusetts Secretary of State's office.

James McGrath was elected president and Dean Maynard vice president. McGrath is a planner on the staff of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and a forester, and Maynard is president and owner of Maynard Landscape Inc. in Lanesboro. Both McGrath and Maynard have master of arts degrees from the Conway School of Landscape Design.

William Florek and Martha Sloper were elected clerk and treasurer, respectively. Florek heads the horticulture department at Pittsfield High School. Sloper is director of finance and administration at Hancock Shaker Village.

Over the last three years, on its own and in collaboration with other groups, the advisory committee has sponsored a variety of activities at Springside Park including tree plantings, tree identification and labeling, tree pruning classes, nature walks, spring cleanups, trail improvements, Arbor Day programs, the planting of a new perennial garden, and Winterfest, a children's festival on the last Saturday in January. Other groups involved are Pittsfield Beautiful, Friends of Springside Park, the Springside Greenhouse Group, and HospiceCare in the Berkshires.



had changed to director of community services, with responsibilities that included the parks.

Hebert Arboretum will carry on the work of the Arboretum Advisory Committee to the Pittsfield Parks and Recreation Commission. The committee, which was formed in 1996 as a project of Pittsfield Beautiful, was dissolved in December with the formation of the new organization.

Peter Arlos submitted a petition that the council ask the county commission for a \$25,000 grant to hire a consultant "to develop a five-year master plan to give Wahconah Park all the amenities of a modern park."

Input sought on citywide park goals

The parks commission plans to hold three or four public hearings beginning in March to gather citizen input on recreational priorities and needs in the city.

The comments will be incorporated in a five-year master plan that community services director Bob Mellace and city planner David Hathaway will be preparing later this year.

Mellace said that the document is used to identify needs and as a resource in funding applications.

Parks commissioners plan to hold the hearings at locations throughout the city including — tentatively — the Froio Senior Center, Conte Community School, Morningside Community School and Williams School. Mellace expects to schedule and announce the first hearings next month. *1/20/00*

Park events fill calendar

The park commission approved dates for several community projects on Monday:

- Berkshire North WIC will hold its annual breastfeeding and baby care fair on August 4 at the First Street Common
- The Babe Ruth League will co-sponsor the annual Gillette Shows carnival at the Berkshire Crossing plaza May 23-29
- The Barrington Stage Company will present the musical "Guys & Dolls" at Springside Park July 26 through August 6. *3/9/00*

Arlos suggests seeking county funds for Wahconah Park

The council's finance subcommittee will review a suggestion that the city seek county monies to develop a master plan for Wahconah Park.

Peter Arlos submitted a petition that the council ask the county commission for a \$25,000 grant to hire a consultant "to develop a five-year master plan to give Wahconah Park all the amenities of a modern park."

Arlos advocates upgrading the historic baseball stadium rather than spending money on a new facility.

"The advantage of an upgrade to Wahconah Park is that it is already a success," wrote Arlos. "The city will not have to take millions in taxable property in order to reinvent the wheel. If we don't care about our past, we cannot hope for our future."

Arlos also said it is appropriate for the city to seek funding from the county government for this study, since county monies have gone disproportionately to other communities. *2/10/00*

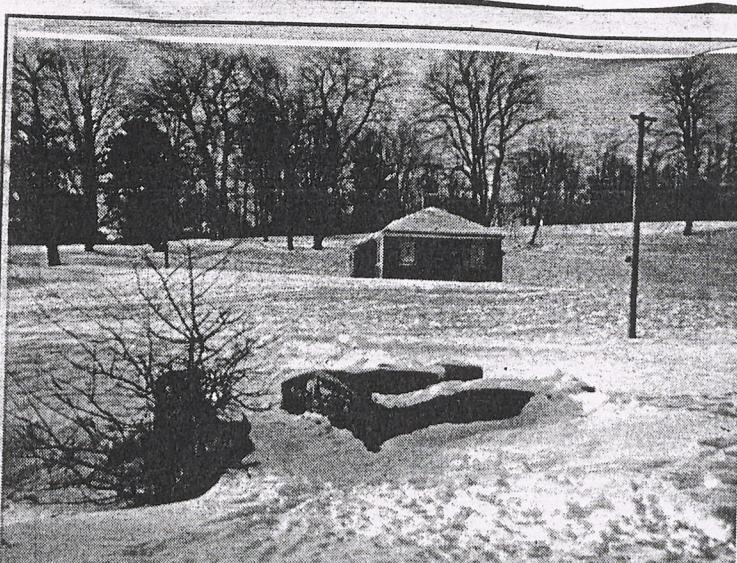
Eagles Band plans free concert at Springside

The Eagles Band will present the first in its series of "Concerts in The Park" on Tuesday at 7 p.m. on the lawn of Springside House, 874 North Street. Conductor Neil Peebern will lead the 60-member Eagles Wind Symphony in a program of traditional and contemporary wind band music.

The Eagles Band celebrates its 64th anniversary this year. Admission is free. Concertgoers are encouraged to bring lawn chairs or blankets. In case of rain, the concert will be held in the Berkshire Athenaeum auditorium. Other concerts in the series are scheduled for July 18 and August 8. *6/9/00*

Eagles Band plans summer concerts

The parks commission on Monday approved three dates for free Eagles Band twilight concerts at Springside Park. The community band plans to perform on June 13, July 18 and August 8. *1/20/00*



Springside Park advocates and park commissioners on Monday praised a master plan for the watershed at the 231-acre tract, but it's unclear whether funds will be available to implement the enhancements.

Plans endorsed for Springside ponds

Plans to revive the ponds at Springside Park earned praise Monday — but questions about paying for the reclamation project remain murky.

"We want this to be one of the premier parks in Pittsfield, without question," said parks commissioner Cliff Nilan, "but I think everything depends on the funding."

Consultants from Greenfield-based Dufresne-Henry, Inc. on Monday presented a final draft of a management study for the Springside's two man-made ponds.

In a project jointly funded by the city and the state environmental management office, the consultants examined the condition of the two ponds and the surrounding watershed.

At several recent parks commission meetings, the consultants listened to comments from Springside advocates representing groups such as the Hebert Arboretum, the Friends of Springside and Pittsfield Beautiful.

See SPRINGSIDE page 7

Pittsfield Gazette Feb. 10, 2000

Springside watershed goals identified

continued from page 1

The consultants walked the property and conducted numerous tests.

Project manager Robert Mellstrom said that both Springside's upper and lower ponds "show the signs of neglect for many years."

Indeed, the upper pond is so filled with sediment that is more of a marsh without visible water. The lower pond is also marshlike at one end, with the bottom section marginally protected by a deteriorated stone dam.

"Primarily what we found was the gravel roads and trails in some cases wash directly into the stream [that feeds the ponds]," said Mellstrom.

Biologist Randall Christensen said that the sediment in the upper pond exceeds seven feet and is nearly as high in portions of the lower pond.

"When you have pond problems, there's always a wide range of solutions," said Christensen.

The key, he said, is to balance environmental, recreational and financial considerations. The goal, where practical, is to increase water depths to levels that remove heated sediment layers — allowing better winter freezing and making it possible to sustain a fish population.

"There's a lot of benefits to the pond if you can get that water level there," he said.

Christensen outlined several op-

tions and appeared to lean toward "sacrificing" the upper pond and partially dredging the lower pond. Under this scenario, the upper section of the lower pond would continue to be used to protect or filter cleaned-up bottom section of the pond.

Consultant Peter Bourgois said one avenue to achieve this goal would be to remove the concrete bottom in the pond and build an improved dam with a walkway across the sections.

The consultants' report also recommends nature trail improvements intended to reduce the flow of gravel into the watershed as well as to ensure continued hiking and educational options.

The plan also highlights numerous enhancements that could be made, particularly in the area surrounding the lower pond. Among the ideas is an "amphitheater" area for musical performances and sledding and a sand play area for children.

Specific "extras" — especially the amphitheater — received mixed marks from the park advocates, but the overall master plan earned praise.

"It's a real improvement to the area," said Jim McGrath. "It lends itself to the mission of the Arboretum."

"I think it's a good plan that turns it into a more functional park," said

James Conant.

The sticking point, however, will be how to pay for any components of the plan.

Mellstrom said that the report identifies "big ticket" items such as dredging that would require major funding; enhancements that would be nice but aren't priorities; and items such as the trail system upgrades — that could be accomplished through a combination of targeted spending and volunteer effort.

Community services director Bob Mellace said that he will use the plan to devise grant applications. The report lists possible funding sources for many items.

The report estimates costs for individual enhancements. For the trail improvements, for example, a new footbridge would likely cost \$10,000 while landscaping for some sections would cost several thousand dollars.

At the upper pond, limited work could be accomplished for about \$12,500 while a full dredging might cost \$73,000 — or more if permitting problems arose.

Partially dredging the lower pond and repairing the dam — the option that seemed to most appeal to those who have attended meetings — could cost nearly \$200,000.

A draft of the report may be viewed from Mellace's office at Springside House, located at 874 North Street.

Arlos says Wahconah question set for ballot

Pittsfield voters will have an opportunity to voice their opinions on whether state money should be used to restore Wahconah Park.

According to former city councilor Peter Arlos, who initiated a signature drive, state officials have certified a public policy question regarding Wahconah and the question will appear on the November ballot.

The question reads: "Shall the representative from this district be instructed to vote in favor of legislation to provide state funds to upgrade and renovate Wahconah Park

to meet minor league baseball standards?"

Although the public policy question does not mention the proposal to build a new stadium on West & Center streets, Arlos believes that the vote will send a message to state legislators and new stadium proponents.

"It will play a very important role," Arlos said. "People that are against the [new] stadium can vote to reha-

bilitate Wahconah Park. And those that are for the stadium, I urge you to vote against this petition calling for the upgrade of Wahconah Park."

Arlos bypassed the city council — which this week rejected a proposed ballot question relating to the new stadium proposal — by obtaining signatures in support of his ballot question and submitting them directly to the secretary of state's office.

7/13/00

Related stories begin on page 1.

Residents share Common concerns

In the wake of two violent incidents at the Pittsfield Common, some neighbors now fear to walk through the once-friendly park.

During a neighborhood meeting on Tuesday evening at the Elizabeth Freeman Center, residents expressed anxieties to police chief Anthony Riello and other city officials.

Some residents said that, even prior to a recent mid-afternoon shooting and a stabbing, drug dealing and loitering at the First Street park created an unwelcoming atmosphere.

"Even in the day, it's not so much the congregation of people but where they congregate," said a park neighbor, who added that he hears gunfire in the park on a regular basis.

Another resident, Tom Shepard, complained that police officers "are few and far between" in the city's downtown. Increased visibility, he added, could help disperse troublemakers.

"There's no police presence anymore," Shepard said. "Something is drastically wrong here. There should be more [police] presence out on the streets."

Riello said that officers, including cruiser and bicycle patrols, regularly patrol the Common. The chief also urged residents to take an active role monitoring the park, perhaps by forming a neighborhood watch.

"We're willing to go the extra mile to work with people who care enough and are motivated enough," Riello said. People who live near the park, he said, should immediately report

a real serious threat to our public safety? I would say, at this point, no."

Riello said that the department closely monitors gang activity and also sponsors gang resistance presentations in local schools.

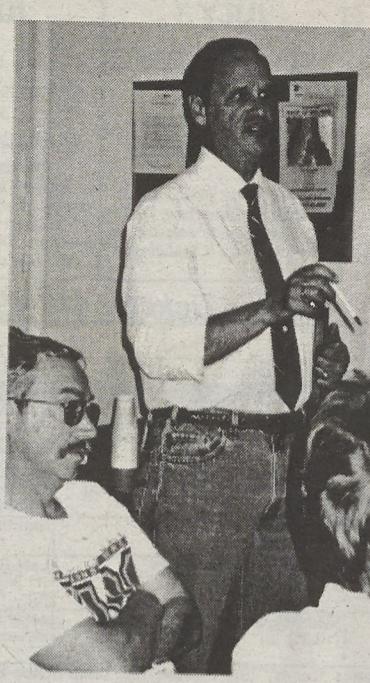
Ward 2 city councilor James Brassard also briefly addressed the audience, detailing a three-pronged response to problems at the Common. Brassard's suggestions included additional lighting in the park, stepped up police patrols and surveillance cameras.

Brassard, in fact, suggested video surveillance in all city parks, which he conceded would be an expensive proposition. "You know what?" he asked. "If it saves one child's life, it's worth it."

The freshman city councilor holds fond memories of the park, where he once rehearsed as a member of a local drum corps. "I don't want to see [the Common] go the way of other things," he said.

The shooting incident took place on June 9, when an assailant fired four shots, hitting no one. Just over a week later, a 19-year-old man was stabbed following a confrontation near the skateboard park at the rear of the Common.

Elizabeth Freeman Center director Marcia Savage said that, while the agency typically deals with issues surrounding violence against women, she believes the organization could play a wider community role to combat problems in the park. "We'd like to join forces with people in the neighborhood," she said. We'd like to be a catalyst. This is a great beginning."



Brassard: three ideas for safer First Street park

incidents or even suspicions. These "nosy" neighbors could play a vital role in alerting police to trouble.

District attorney Gerard Downing agreed, stating that resident reports — even when they don't lead directly to an arrest — often contribute to a more serious sentence after a conviction.

"That's a powerful message to that judge," Downing said.

Some residents expressed worry that youth gangs are gaining a foothold. Riello assured the audience of about 35 people that, while gangs are a concern, they have not become established in the community.

"This is a concern of ours and it has been," the chief said. "Do we see it as

DCC

A frivolous ballpark proposal

The proposal from County Treasurer Peter G. Arlos to use \$25,000 for yet another examination of the feasibility of renovating Wahconah Park should be deposited wherever it is the City Council disposes of frivolous notions. A three-year-old study had already determined the restoration of the charming but outdated ball field to be nearly as costly as building a new stadium. And even if Wahconah Park were refurbished, the management of Pittsfield's New York-Penn League franchise has made it that isn't good enough to keep professional baseball in the Berkshires. Such a donation might make sense were it designated to determine how to reconfigure the Wahconah Park site were a new multipurpose stadium constructed in the city's downtown. But if the county treasurer actually wanted to help Pittsfield, he would have suggested that a tributary of the rivers of cash supposedly flowing into county coffers be redirected to salvage city's educational system.

5/18/00



Youngsters clamber on the Pittsfield Common's jungle gym in late March of 1961. *3/2/00*



Pittsfield's Park Square as it appeared in May 1972. *3/3/00*



Civil action *4/26/00*
Frank Romeo of Taylor Memorials uses brushes and soapy water to clean the granite Civil War Soldier monument in Park Square yesterday.

Arlos proposes new study of Wahconah Park

By Erik Arvidson
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — County Treasurer Peter G. Arlos has proposed spending \$50,000 out of county coffers to hire a consultant to develop a five-year plan to make Wahconah Park suitable for minor league baseball.

But state Rep. Peter J. Larkin, D-Pittsfield, said the county's fiscal 2000 budget "has no free cash" or reserve funds available to spend on studies, and that all remaining county funds will be applied toward the county's unfunded pension liability when county government is dissolved June 30.

Arlos has submitted a petition, which was approved by the City Council's Finance Committee Tuesday, asking that the city request \$50,000 from the county budget for a study on upgrading and expanding Wahconah Park.

Marshy site

Arlos said that efforts by the private sector to build a 6,500-seat multipurpose stadium near Center and West streets will be too costly because of eminent domain takings and that the site being considered is too marshy for such a facility.

In an interview yesterday, Arlos said the money could be donated to the city from a discretionary spending line item in the county budget, which has a \$182,720 balance.

But Larkin contended that the county would be inappropriately spending money already earmarked to be credited along with all of the county's assets against the pension liability.

"With the dissolution of county government, any monies remaining within the county would be applied toward the pension liability," Larkin said. "This is not

money that's available for studies in the closing moments of county government. There's no free cash sitting unattended for in the county commissioners' office."

1997 study

Larkin added that a 1997 study, commissioned by the city to look at options for a new ballpark, was sufficient. "Why spend another \$50,000 on something we already have in hand?" he said.

That study, undertaken by a team of four consultants, found that it would cost approximately \$11.4 million for a major reconstruction of the 5,200-seat Wahconah Park.

But that would not correct other deficiencies, including the fact that Wahconah Park is located within a flood plain and is surrounded by wetlands, and that there is insufficient space for storage and front office personnel offices.

"Minor league teams are under a tremendous amount of pressure to meet the franchise requirements," Larkin said.

The New York Mets have said they will end their affiliation with the Pittsfield franchise of the New York-Penn League after this summer. William Gladstone, who owns the franchise, has said the long-term viability of baseball in the city depends on a suitable facility that meets minor league standards.

"We have to show good intentions that we're going to bring Wahconah Park up to standards," Arlos said. "The people who want to build a multipurpose stadium can build the stadium and take their time, although I'm opposed to any public money being used."

Pittsfield has a "built-in audience" of about 80,000 for the Mets from throughout Berkshire County, he said.

3/10/00
ARLOS, continued on B5



Anglers try their luck at a May 1969 fishing derby at Wild Acres Pond off South Mountain and Barker roads in Pittsfield. *3/4/00*

Arlos from B1 *3/10/00*

Arlos also compiled a list of 30 properties that overlap or are within the approximate footprint of the proposed facility. The combined assessed value of the properties exceeds \$3.8 million, Arlos said, using figures from the assessors' office.

He added that any private entity that would have to take those properties by eminent domain would pay far more than the assessed value.

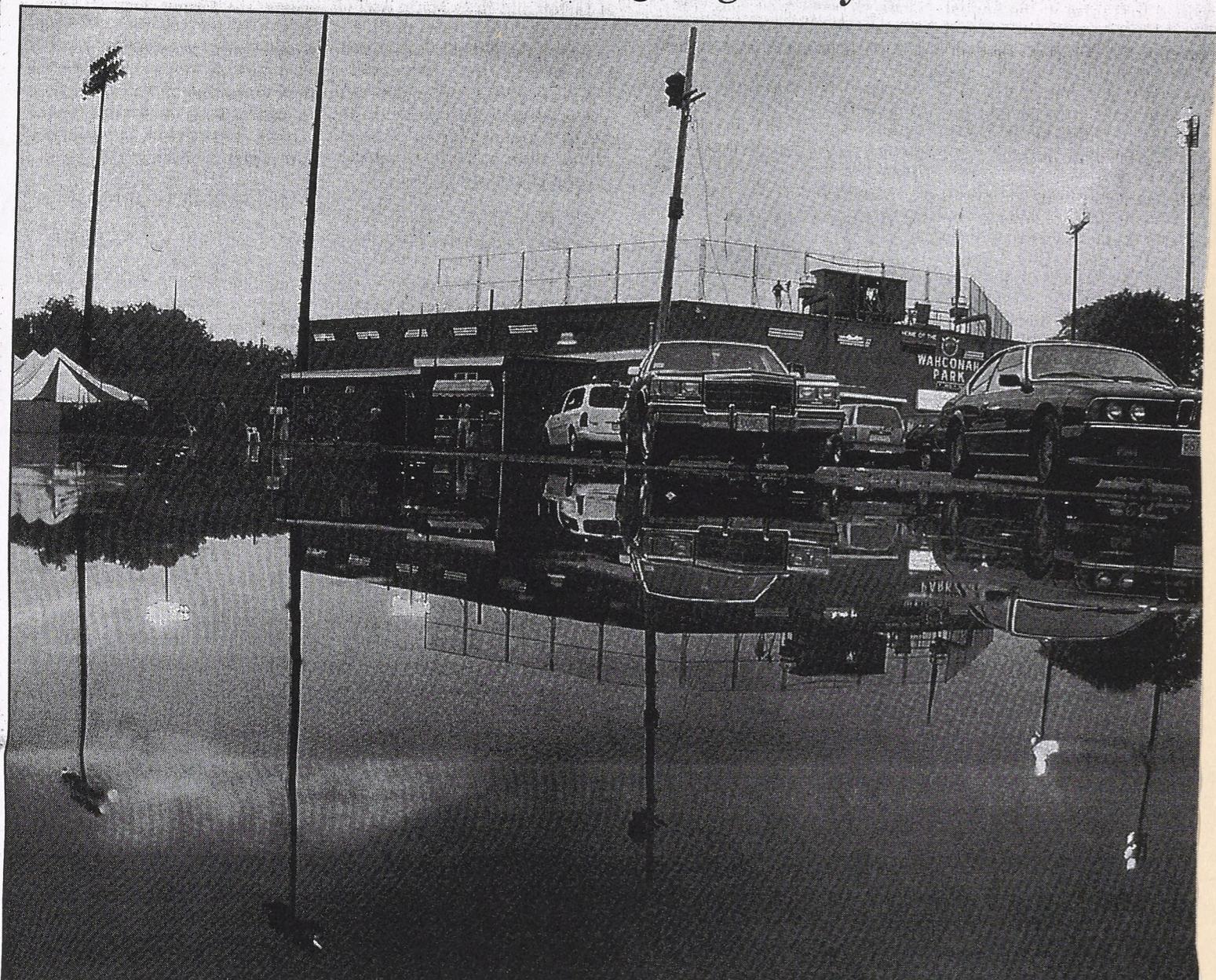
Another problem with the proposed site, Arlos said, is the fact that the ground is marshy and unsuitable for a \$15 million facility. He cited an 1870 study by the then-Board of Water Commissioners that said the area between West Street and Church Street was a bog.

Berkshire Bank and New England Newspapers Inc., a subsidiary of MediaNews Group, which owns The Eagle, have paid \$30,000 each to secure a six-month option on the Falcon car dealership, with four months remaining on the option.

Maxmillian Technologies has been hired by the companies to test the ground around the proposed site, and will drill test borings on March 20.

Eagle Publisher Martin C. Langeveld said the tests shouldn't be seen as the start of work on the project, but as "due diligence" prior to selecting the site. "We're testing the soil to see what kind of foundations we might have to build," Langeveld said. "We don't want this to be seen as work getting under way."

Rain, rain ... going away?



Sunday night's storm, which left the Wahconah Park parking lot underwater the next day, pushed this month's rainfall total in Pittsfield to 11 inches, a record amount for June. More normal summer weather is forecast for July.

Record-setting June soaks Berkshires

By Clarence Fanto
Berkshire Eagle Staff

Berkshire County residents, who may feel they have been living in a tropical rain forest this month, can look forward to some drying out, beginning this weekend.

More normal summer weather is being forecast following the wettest June since record-keeping began 60 years ago at Pittsfield Municipal Airport.

11 inches for month

There may be more showers today or tomorrow, but as of yesterday afternoon, the monthly total of 11 inches at the National Weather Service observation site had shattered, by far, the previous record for June — 7.74 inches in 1989. The runner-up had been

June 1998, with just more than 7.5 inches. Normal rainfall for the month in Pittsfield is 4.13 inches.

The record for the single wettest month of the year remains in place and appears to be safe — August 1990, with a mind-boggling 14.02 inches. The runner-up remains May 1984, with 13.95 inches.

As usual, some of this past month's downpours have hit some parts of the county harder than others — such as Cheshire, Adams and New Ashford, where a Sunday night cloudburst caused numerous road washouts and more than a half-million dollars of damage, according to local estimates.

A total of 9.58 inches has fallen in North Adams, said John Hockridge, president of New Eng-

land Weather Associates, a private forecasting service based at the North Adams Airport. The area was less hard hit by some of the rainstorms earlier this month.

In Great Barrington, at the weather station maintained by WSBS Radio, 8.70 inches of rain had been recorded through yesterday afternoon.

Only 10 of the 28 days of the month so far have been rain-free, and that has stymied farmers' planting, frustrated swimming-pool owners and golfers, and thrown into disarray contractors' and painters' work schedules.

Just about everyone with outdoor work or recreational pursuits has been affected.

A nearly daily clash between unusually persistent cool air masses plunging into the North-

east from central Canada and the normal sizzling, humid air masses over the southeast United States is being blamed for the persistent thunderstorms and rainstorms that have drenched the Berkshires, producing some impressive one-day rainfall totals.

According to Richard Westergard, senior meteorologist for the National Weather Service in Albany, N.Y., Berkshire County has been hard-hit by a series of especially intense rainstorms. Albany, for example, has had only 6.66 inches of rain so far this month — still above average.

"We're closer than usual to the boundary between cooler polar air to the north and the warmer tropical air that normally moves north

RAIN, continued on B4

Voters endorse Wahconah Park upgrade question

Wahconah Park scored a victory on Tuesday.

A majority of city voters in the 3rd Berkshire District — which includes all of Pittsfield except for ward 1, precinct B and ward 4 — supported an upgrade of the venerable stadium.

Question 10 read:

"Shall the state representative from this district be instructed to vote in favor of legislation to provide state funds to upgrade and renovate Wahconah Park to meet minor league baseball standards?"

The sponsor of the public policy

question, Peter Arlos, believes the results express residents' love of Wahconah Park and skepticism about building a new downtown stadium.

"We won a significant victory," Arlos said. "Especially when you consider its position on the ballot."

Question 10 appeared at the far end of the ballot, dwarfed by the voluminous Question 9, which called for formation of a Berkshire Regional Council of Governments.

The Wahconah Park question was also criticized by opponents, who argued against the legitimacy of a

ballot question that did not poll all city voters. Arlos said that he selected the 3rd Berkshire District because it covered exclusively Pittsfield. Adding another Berkshire district would have inconvenienced numerous other cities and towns who have little interest in Wahconah Park, Arlos said.

"In spite of the misrepresentation of the Berkshire Eagle and their refusal to let me respond to their criticism, we were able to prevail," Arlos said. "It shows the strong commitment of this city to Wahconah Park."



This year's city Arbor Day commemoration honored the late Vincent J. Hebert. Nearly 75 people attended an emotional ceremony on the Springside Park lawn. Members of Vin Hebert's family helped plant lilac bushes in his memory.

Arbor Day event salutes Hebert's legacy

By Anthony Fyden

In a blustery breeze at Springside Park on Friday, nearly 75 people gathered to celebrate Arbor Day and honor Vincent J. Hebert, a man who dedicated his life to improving city parks.

"A lot of people do not realize what this man did for the City of Pittsfield," said park supervisor John Marchesi, a longtime friend of Hebert's. "I don't think he ever slept; he was a twenty-four hour man."

The parks department dedicated this year's Arbor Day commemoration to Hebert, a former parks director and longtime parks advocate who died last year. Marchesi and other speakers lauded Hebert's dedication and gentle nature.

Several park improvements championed by Hebert could be seen from the Springside lawn, Marchesi said. These include the relocation of the original Springside Greenhouse, renovation of the Springside House mansion for use as a parks department headquarters, construction of a park access road and the planting of nearly 4,000 tulip bulbs.

Marchesi also noted that Hebert, who was born in Quincy, earned commendations for his service in the Navy.

Mayor Gerald Doyle, Jr. commended Hebert as a relentless advocate who was universally respected. Hebert was also a wise politician when he needed to be, Doyle said. "He knew the rules and the ropes, that's for sure," Doyle remarked, with a laugh.

Others urged Pittsfield residents to carry on Hebert's legacy by supporting parks and conservation efforts. Community services director Robert Mellace called Hebert "a man who dedicated a large part of his life to making this city a better place to live."

Mellace said that Hebert's vision is particularly being realized at Springside Park. "This park is such a jewel whose potential is just being realized," he said.

Irene Staskin, another friend of Hebert's, sang two songs which she

said epitomized Hebert's positive outlook — "There's Always Tomorrow" and "April Showers."

Fred Garner, president of the Friends of Wild Acres and the grandson of Vincent Hebert, spoke emotionally of his grandfather's commitment to Pittsfield. "He knew what this city has to offer," he said. "He wanted a nice community for his kids to grow up."

James McGrath, president of the Vin Hebert Arboretum, said that development of a "world class arboretum" at Springside Park is progressing. The Conway School of Land-

Park Square project delayed

By Erik Arvidson
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — Wet weather has caused the restoration work at Park Square to fall behind schedule. City officials say the work won't be done by the Memorial Day holiday, as planned.

The contractor hired by the city, Mountainview Landscapes and Lawncare Inc., has had difficulty completing landscaping and other park improvements because of the rainy weather over the past month.

Robert S. Mellace, the city's director of community services, said the contractor expects to be sodding and completing other landscaping work, as well as installing new trash receptacles, next week.

He said he expects 90 percent of the project to be completed by late next week.

"Anybody with outdoor projects has been delayed by the weather," Mellace said. "The contractors are anxious to get it done and get on to other projects."

Light posts damaged

Mellace said the classic-style black, wrought-iron light posts with acorn-shaped bulbs for the park were damaged when the manufacturer shipped them and they had to be returned.

The manufacturer is assuming the cost for replacing them since they arrived damaged, Mellace said. He expects the light posts to be installed sometime in mid-June.

There is also some restoration work remaining with the Civil War monument, which is being done by Taylor Memorials of Pittsfield, Mellace said.

Next week, Pittsfield Beautiful will plant a floral display of four flower beds around the fountain, Mellace said.

The project also included installing new benches, putting in decorative stones, the planting of shrubs and grass sodding.

The improvements are being funded partly by a \$140,000 Preservation Projects Fund grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Park Square is listed on the state Register of Historic Places.



Round and square

Mason Armando Rodrigues of Mountain View Landscapes and Lawn Care of Chicopee places flat pieces of granite around the Civil War monument in Park Square. The contractor has overseen recent work at the Pittsfield park.

5/21/00

Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Control of Pontoosuc Lake stuck in legal limbo

Pontoosuc Lake straddles the border of Pittsfield and Lanesboro, but at the moment it's in limbo.

According to state department of environmental management officials, the transfer of lake management from the county to DEM is tied up in state bureaucracy, specifically the state department of capital asset management.

"We haven't been able to take over," Paul Adams of DEM told the board of park commissioners on Monday. "We haven't been able to actually get our hands on it yet. Our lawyers are working on it."

Before ceasing as a government body at the end of June, the county commission voted to transfer management of Pontoosuc Lake to the DEM. The plan had the support of local officials as well as lake advocates.

Adams said that, despite the delay, he expects the transfer will eventually work its way through. It is important, he added, to move forward so that the department can se-

cure the proper permits which allow the annual lake drawdown to take place in the fall.

DEM officials have already made some changes. Last month, several buoys were installed to better delineate swimming areas and boat launching routes.

Mark Todd, a state forest supervisor, told commissioners that lake users have voiced support for the buoys. "They feel a lot safer about that area," he said. "I think it's a

major improvement myself."

Community services director Bob Mellace said he has heard a few complaints regarding the buoys, specifically from boaters who feel that the channel for boat traffic is too narrow.

Nonetheless, Mellace supports the buoys. "I think it's a safer facility than it was before," he said.

Additional buoys will be added in the near future, identifying low water areas and designating "no wake" areas.

8/17/00

Finance panel endorses use of grant for ballpark study

By Erik Arvidson
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — Assured by County Treasurer Peter G. Arlos that the county has surplus funds available, the Finance Committee last night recommended that the city request a \$25,000 grant from the county to fund a five-year master plan to upgrade Wahconah Park.

The committee voted unanimously to request the grant from the county's supplemental budget for fiscal 2000, with some councilors arguing that the 70-year-old park is a historical asset that shouldn't be ignored as plans move forward with a new privately funded multipurpose stadium.

But while Arlos keeps the county's books, the County Advisory Committee would have to approve any such appro-

priation, and the county commissioners and state officials have already said that no surplus funds exist.

All of the county's remaining cash at the end of the fiscal year, on June 30, is to be applied toward the county's unfunded pension liability, according to the county commissioners and state Rep. Peter J. Larkin, D-Pittsfield.

"You can come down and look at the books. There's money there," Arlos told the committee. He said the city could request the grant from the county, "and if they don't give it to you, it's because they don't want to give it to you."

Arlos' petition was originally approved by the committee, which amended it to increase the amount of the request to \$50,000. But the council sent it back to

WAHCONAH, continued on A4



Shannon DeCelle / Berkshire Eagle Staff
Councilors who support funding a master plan to upgrade Wahconah Park say the 70-year-old park is a historical asset.

Wahconah from A1

4/21/00
the committee when uncertainty arose over whether the county had the money available. The committee last night considered Arlos' original funding amount of \$25,000.

Councilor at large Matthew M. Kerwood said a 1998 study, funded by the city and undertaken by a team of consultants, outlined in detail all of the deficiencies at Wahconah Park and said it would cost \$11.4 million to bring it up to minor league baseball standards.

Kerwood asked Arlos what further amenities and upgrades to the park would be identified by doing another study.

"They did a bad job. I have no confidence in what they said," Arlos said of the study. He added that the consultants who did the study listed the First Street Common as one of the potential sites for a new ballpark. "Can you imagine trying to build it at the Common?" he asked.

Kerwood said the point of the study was also to find the strengths and deficiencies of Wahconah Park. He added that he hoped if any new study were done, it would take into account the work included in the 1998 study so that there is no duplication.

Arlos contended there is no base of support for a new stadium, and that an effort by the private sector to build a new 5,000-seat stadium on the site of the former Falcon auto dealership would fail for a lack of financing.

Berkshire Bank and New England Newspapers Inc., the parent company of The Berkshire Eagle, have put up \$60,000 for a six-month option on the Falcon

property while the site is studied to see if it's suitable for a \$15 million stadium.

Arlos, a former city councilor, said the city should have an "insurance policy" in case that plan falls through.

"The only thing we're going to do is develop a five-year master plan so that you have something in place to improve Wahconah Park incrementally by increment," Arlos said.

Ward 6 Councilor Daniel L. Bianchi said he favored a study that determined not only whether the park is suitable for minor league baseball, but also the best community use for the park if there was no professional baseball played there.

Arlos even suggested that the council have City Treasurer David A. Kiley look over the county's books with Arlos' administrative assistant, Anthony R. Izzo, to prove there is money available.

The county commissioners were not in attendance. But the commission sent a letter to the committee stating that Arlos was wrong in his belief that the county could spend money on a study. Arlos' petition now goes back to the council for its May 9 meeting.

While discussing the new stadium proposal, Arlos said the plan could be put in jeopardy by a recent ruling by a Springfield Superior Court judge, who ruled against the city of Springfield's eminent-domain taking of parcels for a professional baseball stadium.

While there are commercial and residential properties inside the Pittsfield stadium's approximate footprint, stadium proponents say taking them by eminent domain is not being seriously considered.

Opponents of the Boston Red

Sox' plan to build a new Fenway Park have used the Springfield ruling as legal fodder to argue that the proposed stadium has to serve the public good.

Herbert P. Gleason, who advises the anti-ballpark group the Fenway Action Coalition, said in an interview that recent legal judgments such as the Springfield decision only prohibit public financing and land takings for ballparks when the stadium is exclusively for a professional team.

"There's nothing wrong with a ballpark. I think if the ballpark were available for uses other than a single professional team, there might be a public purpose," Gleason said.

Gleason said the state Supreme Judicial Court recently ruled that a public purpose that could justify public financing and land takings for ballparks include holding such events as "civic, philanthropic and educational meetings, conventions, labor meetings, amateur and school athletics."

Proponents of the stadium have said that the "multipurpose" concept means that the stadium would be opened up to the community in those ways.

Still, city Community Development Director Thomas F. Murphy said the current efforts are to negotiate land sales with the property owners rather than use eminent domain.

"We're sensitive and aware of the Springfield situation and the Red Sox situation. We do not believe [eminent domain] would be in our best interest," Murphy said.

Mayor Gerald S. Doyle Jr. has also said he won't support financing a new stadium with taxpayers' money.

COUNCIL REPORT

MARCH 14 MEETING

Request for Wahconah study sent back to subcommittee

A proposal to seek a county grant for a study of Wahconah Park's future will be reviewed a second time by the council's finance subcommittee.

Former councilor Peter Arlos had submitted a petition suggesting that the city seek \$25,000 in surplus from county government for the project.

Last week, finance subcommittee members were so enamored of Arlos' idea that they not only endorsed his proposal but amended his petition to request \$50,000.

On Tuesday, however, council president Tom Hickey — who voted in favor of the plan last week — said it should be sent back to the subcommittee for further review.

Hickey said that he now has doubts about whether county funds are truly available or if they have already been designated to cover pension costs. He suggested inviting county commissioners to the finance subcommittee meeting.

Other councilors also expressed reservations about making the request, citing the uncertainty of the funding, the existence of a prior study focusing on Wahconah Park and the possibility of conflicting with a new stadium project.

"I think personally it's a waste of money to do another study," said Rick Scapin.

"We're looking maybe at duplication here," agreed Paul Dowd.

Matt Kerwood, who voted for making the study funding request last week, said that he's since read a 1997 document on Wahconah Park that he feels is sufficient.

Gary Grunin supported the referral back to the subcommittee, but said the old report had a different scope than the new proposal. The goal of that report was bringing Wahconah Park back to professional standards; now the focus might be on community uses.

Bill Barry said that rather than seeking funds for a Wahconah study, "I'd like to use this money for the new ballpark."

Jim Brassard, who served on the

stadium siting committee, noted his board never even considered the Center Street new stadium location now touted by the mayor, the Berkshire Eagle and Berkshire Bank.

James Massery said Arlos' petition had good intentions, but further scrutiny is warranted because "we are considering funding that may not exist."

Dan Bianchi supported the referral back to the subcommittee but said Arlos' idea to study Wahconah has merit because even with a new sta-

dium, "we will still be left with Wahconah Park."

Gerald Lee cast the lone dissenting vote in the 9-1 referral back to the subcommittee. He said that Wahconah Park's future as a community asset is worth exploring and that the council is merely asking for outside funds. If the monies aren't available, the study simply won't proceed.

"We're asking the county commission for money," Lee said. "If they don't have it, they'll turn us down."

The Pittsfield Gazette March 16, 2000



Reversal: councilors are reconsidering the possibility of seeking a study of Wahconah Park's future

Doyle sees stadium project as key to 'build for the future'

continued from page 1

and city community development director Tom Murphy, discussed the project with members of the press on Wednesday.

Berkshire Sports and Events hopes to build an approximately 5,000 seat stadium at the former Falcon property which would potentially be used for minor league baseball, concerts and other events.

According to Berkshire Eagle president Andy Mick, MediaNews owner Dean Singleton has committed \$2 million towards the project, along with donation of an adjacent parking lot currently owned by the Eagle.

Mick said on Wednesday that Singleton believes in the ability of stadiums to serve as economic engines. The availability of the former Falcon site sparked renewed interest in the Pittsfield project, Mick said, and Singleton warmed to the idea.

Mick added that, while a stadium could improve the city's overall business climate, the Eagle has no direct financial interest. "There's no hidden agenda here," he said.

Michael Daly, Berkshire Bank vice president, said that the institution will also make a financial contribution, although he did not disclose the amount.

Wednesday marked the first time that Doyle has detailed the city's role in paying for the stadium. The mayor said that the city's financial contribution would be limited to consent decree and bonded funds. "We're not going to raise taxes to build this facility," he said.

Doyle views the stadium as a key component in revitalizing the city's downtown. His comments on

Wednesday underscored his commitment to the project — and, indeed, suggests that he hopes to make the project a centerpiece of his administration.

"My vision is to build for the future," the mayor said. "Anybody that knows me knows that I'm not afraid to make a decision. People have the right to make a decision on me every two years."

Wahconah not viable

Doyle said that Wahconah Park simply does not meet the standards for modern professional baseball. Doyle dismissed an effort by former city councilor Peter Arlos to consider refurbishing Wahconah.

The old park has problems ranging from poor wiring to a parking lot that floods regularly.

"The facility is antiquated," Doyle said. "It's turned into a money pit. We're putting band aids on that park, year after year. Without a new facility, we will not have [professional] baseball in Pittsfield."

Doyle, added, however, that "we're not prepared to scrap Wahconah Park by any means," saying it would be adequate for Babe Ruth baseball and other youth sports.

While the developers have been working on the project since December, Murphy conceded that specifics remain vague. Initial estimates call for the project to cost \$15 million-18 million.

It also remains unclear who will own or operate the facility. One possibility, Murphy said, is to create a city "authority" that would manage the stadium. "We're trying to get our arms around what it is the best avenue to pursue," he said.

The design of the structure has also not yet been determined. Murphy presented rough sketches of a stadium "footprint" — which offer little detail but demonstrate that the facility could fit at the property.

The involvement of National Pastimes, Inc., which currently owns the Pittsfield Mets, remains a key to the project. The local presence and history of the Mets — the team is committed to play ball at Wahconah Park through this season — is a "vital advantage," Murphy said.

"Partnership with a team is a must," he said. "They know baseball. We want to keep baseball." Ronald Griffin, president of EDM engineering, which is assisting in the project, speculated that a final stadium plan would blend well with

the surrounding cityscape, including buildings such as Clock Tower and the Greylock Federal Credit Union headquarters.

Doyle said that, while the project will be unveiled to the community as soon as plans develop, he does not expect a comprehensive public hearing process.

"I'm elected to make these decisions," he said. "I'm very serious about this project... because I've seen what it's done for the economy of [other] cities."

"This will be built by the community," the mayor added, "to be used by the community to benefit the entire region."

While considering the new stadium, members of the development team have traveled to several cities

that have recently built new stadiums, including Denver, Colorado and Erie, Pennsylvania.

On the latest junket, members of the development team visited Lowell, Massachusetts, which two years ago built a stadium to host a Boston Red Sox farm team.

Community development director Murphy said that the Lowell stadium, which draws nearly 200,000 visitors per season, is providing a catalyst for growth. One nearby restaurant, he said, has rebounded and additional development is booming.

"You've got development going on right across the street," Murphy said. "A foul ball goes over the fence and it's in this development. That's the kind of impact this facility has had on this community."

Mayor eyes PCB funds for Eagle stadium plan

By Anthony Fyden

"Economic development" funds from the General Electric consent decree may be used to build a new downtown stadium, Mayor Gerald Doyle, Jr. said on Wednesday.

Doyle said that an undetermined portion of the \$10 million package that GE has promised the city — money specifically designated for "economic development purposes" and slated to be paid at \$1 million per year — would likely help pay for the stadium. In addition, he said, the city may borrow funds to build the multi-purpose facility currently targeted for West Street.

"This facility is on the move right now," the mayor said, "and now is the time we have to act."

A private partnership, led by Berkshire Eagle and Berkshire Bank, is currently considering the viability of building a multi-purpose stadium off West Street at the site of the former Falcon Chevrolet.

In December, the partnership, called Berkshire Sports and Events, LLC, paid \$60,000 for a six month purchase option on the property.

Members of the partnership development committee, along with Doyle

See STADIUM page 19



The slightly damp conditions outside Wahconah Park are one reason that Mayor Gerald Doyle, Jr. believes a new stadium should replace Wahconah. Two ducks this week took up temporary residence in the flooded parking lot.

3/16/00

PRIORITIES FOR PITTSFIELD'S PARKS

Crosby students add ideas to city's master plan for parks

7/35 Teens help to rid city of graffiti

By Lisa Gosselin
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — Local teenagers are putting down the spray paint and picking up paint brushes to help rid the city of graffiti.

Using an emulsifier and a little elbow grease, a half-dozen teenagers, all on probation, this week scrubbed away profanity, satanic messages and the initials of graffiti artists — only to find another layer of graffiti underneath.

The teens weren't there by choice, but in the end they may take pride in their work.

An effort to clean up graffiti throughout the city is under way thanks to a state grant awarded to the Pittsfield Police Department.

The Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant, which totals roughly \$10,000, was awarded to the department by the state Office for Juvenile Justice and Prevention last October. The funds paid for an emulsifier, paint, tools and a water pressure remover.

Officer Michael J. Wynn is coordinating the program for the Police Department and plans to target areas in addition to Deming Park for cleanup, including Pitt Park, the Common, Fred Garner Park and the dam at Onota Lake. The grant also paid for computer equipment and a digital camera to help police catalog graffiti in the city, Wynn said.

Officials plan to document the graffiti, immediately remove it and then use the information they gather for prosecution, Wynn said.

The police are working in conjunction with Community Corrections and Berkshire Juvenile Court to assign youth, and some adults, to clean up the graffiti as part of the community service they are under court order to perform.

Deming Park cleanup

They chose Deming Park first because the Little League All-Star tournament will begin soon. Officials also hope to get Pitt Park cleaned up before the Aug. 1 National Night Out.

"This is one of the tools that we have to pay back the community," said William D. Gale, chief probation officer of the Berkshire Juvenile Court. "Kids hate working for free. They don't like to work in the first place, but they have to do their hours or they will be found in violation of probation and brought back before a judge."

At the same time, the cleanup projects get the teenagers out of the house and into a situation in which they can develop a positive relationship with the police and probation officers, he added.

Gale also hopes the youth will develop a sense of ownership and become protective of the areas which they have cleaned.

"It pays back the community. The kids build self-esteem, and it teaches them skills. It's not easy work," he said.

The youth are required to perform eight hours of community service per month in lieu of paying a \$50 monthly probation fee, and some teenagers are assigned additional hours of community service as part of their sentences, Gale explained.

The Community Corrections and Juvenile Probation departments have teenagers and adults performing community service projects two or three days per week. The graffiti mission will take place one day every other week.

All of the projects must be done for the city or for a nonprofit agency, Gale said.

In response to requests for public input for the five-year update of the master plan for Pittsfield's parks, some Crosby School students submitted ideas to community services director Bob Mellace.

The students' letters were distributed to parks commissioners. Mellace said that some of the concepts will be incorporated into the official report.

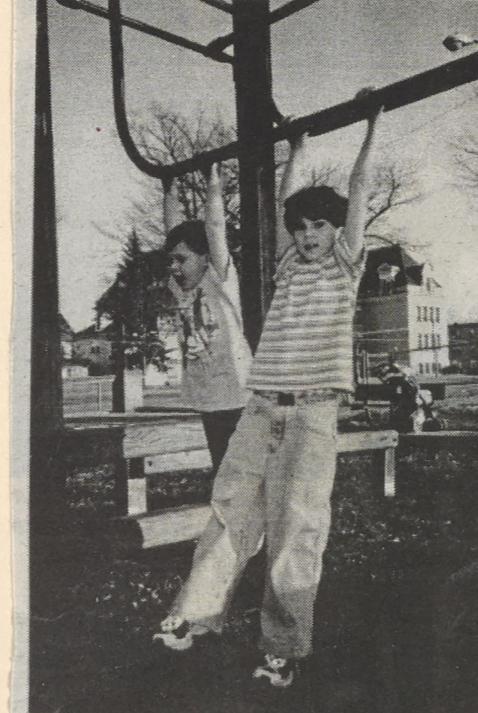
Here are some of the students' letters:

I think Clapp Park needs picnic tables and more places to sit in the summer and even in the winter and all the seasons. I think that because there's no picnic table and not enough places to sit. There's a lot of people that go there that's why I think that. I know there's a lot of people that go there because I live near there.

Krystal Rosier

I think we should get more things to do at Park Square. It's a nice park and all but it's boring!! If we had a playground on the side then our parents could sit on the bench when we play in the playground.

Victoria Simon



Playground equipment remains important to city youngsters, according to park "master plan" letters written by Crosby School fourth graders.

I think there should be places for mothers and toddlers to go when their kids are in school. I think we should fix up playgrounds too.

Meghan Behrent

I think in Clapp Park there should be a rollerblading place to skate. There is a bike place and I want a rollerblade. If you could do that I would be really happy.

Angela Ringie

I think you should put some soccer goals in the back of Crosby School. The reasons why are: the old ones have no net, they are twice the size of some kids, and also they are falling apart.

Maggie Pytro

I think at Clapp Park you should put a skate park there and make a part of the hill cement and make a jump at the bottom. I think you should put a skate park in the back of Crosby. Make a skate park at all of the parks.

Ryan Wells

I think at Clapp Park we should have a rollerblading place. I want that because I like rollerblading. If we got one that would be great.

Rachael Breault

I think you should put in more slides in parks. I think that because I think slides are the best part of a park. I also think there should be more swings because I always swing on the swing set at school.

Evan Cohen

I think we need more swings in Osceola Park because that park barely has swings. And swings are my favorite thing to play on so we need more swings for us to play on.

Tara Tellier

I think you should improve the fields at BCC so it doesn't get so muddy. It would be nice to have lights so players can have night games. I would like some benches for the team and bleachers for the audience.

Eliot J. Papas

I think Clapp Park should have more swings there and more things to play with there.

Ameera Abdallah

I think that BCC's soccer field's should be flattened. Also I think you should put in a playground near the soccer fields. I think you should put a skateboard, rollerblade, and biking park.

Shaun Doscher

I think you should put one more basketball court at Clapp Park. You should put more swings and another slide. I think you should put jumps for roller blades, skate boards, and bikes.

Adam Zuber

I think you need to put in some half pipes, and redo the basketball court and my mom wants a swimming pool in there "Please."

Travis Carlson

I think you should put up some water slides at Clapp Park because there is lots of room there and it would be fun for kids and adults.

Chelsea Burnham

I think you should put in a dinosaur in Clapp Park that has a tail for a slide and a hole in the middle of him. Inside the hole it will tell everything about dinosaurs you know and the spikes would be a ladder. I would like a dinosaur in the park so small kids know what a dinosaur looks like.

Felicia Mierzejewski

I think you should fix up Clapp Park with more things to play on like see-saws and swings.

Sophie Carne

I think there should be a skateboard park in Clapp Park with a half pipe and a couple of jumps. Also a grinding pipe. There should be one jump that is 20 feet high, with two more grinding pipes. And one more half pipe.

Graham Bryce



Rollerblading and skateboarding facilities should be installed at Clapp Park, the students suggest



Club members/visitors relax on the sun deck of the Blue Anchor Club at Pontoosuc Lake in July, 1940. The building was erected in 1909 as the Pittsfield Boat Club, where members could dine, dance and play tennis as well as engage in water sports. It became the Blue Anchor Club in 1929 and was sold in 1945 to former Eagle publisher Lawrence K. Miller, who gave it to the city. The club was torn down the following year to create space for a park.

6/27/00

Charms of Wahconah Park get wildly divergent reviews

continued from page 1

In the magazine, which is aimed at upscale investors, writer Paul Lukas waxes on the joys of minor league baseball and the intimate character of the parks that serve as hosts.

Lukas lists his seven favorite minor league destinations, including both new parks and older ones, which "exude character and history." Although the parks were unranked, Wahconah topped the list.

"Ball parks are typically oriented with homeplate to the west and center field to the east, but this rugged Berkshire beauty, built in 1919 and now home to the Pittsfield Mets, is positioned the other way around, resulting in a unique ritual: The sun sets in the batter's and umpire's eyes on summer evenings, occasionally necessitating a *sun* delay," Lukas writes.

"With plastic owls hanging from the rafters to ward off pigeons, and fans and players mingling as they exit via the same walkway, Wahconah offers the definitive old-time minor league experience," the writer concludes.

Since December, a partnership led by the Berkshire Eagle and Berkshire Bank — and supported by the city — has been considering the viability of a new multi-purpose stadium at the former Falcon Chevrolet property on West & Center streets.

Doyle touts the stadium concept as the only hope for professional baseball in Pittsfield. But other officials continue to lobby for Wahconah.

"I think that Wahconah Park still has a lot to offer this community," Guzzo says. "I think it's still viable for minor league baseball, with effort."

The "Money Magazine" article impressed Guzzo; in fact, he circulated the article to fellow councilors. "The park has a lot of old time charm and the people that report on a national level about baseball recognize that," he said. "I distributed that because I felt it was important."

Guzzo believes that the park's most visible drawbacks — including a parking lot that floods and restrooms

and locker room facilities that are inadequate — could be addressed.

His first suggestion is to remove the Mill Street Dam, which he believes is contributing to flooding problems. Once the dam is removed, he says, the parking lot could be improved without blacktopping.

The field, Guzzo contends, is in decent shape, particularly since the city upgraded it two years ago. Other improvements could be made incrementally. The ward 7 councilor added that he is not trying to anger new stadium proponents, but simply wants a public debate.

"I don't see where there's a lot of support for a new stadium," Guzzo said. "We haven't really had a public discussion of this."

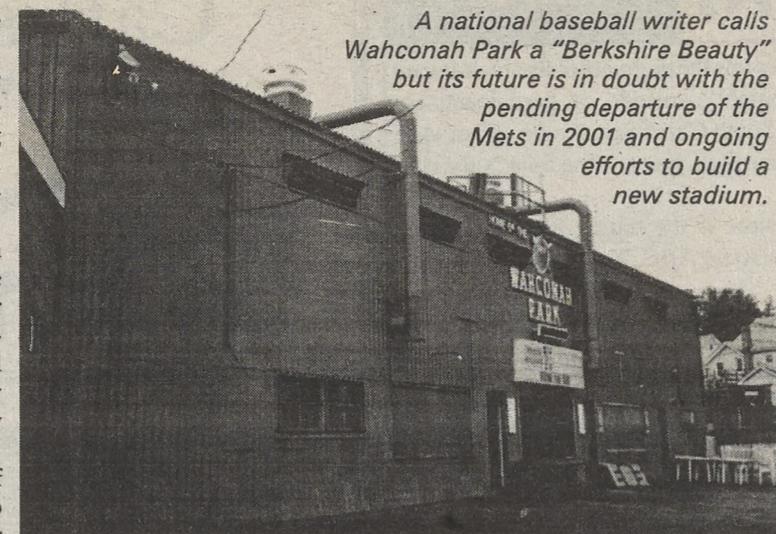
Former city councilor Peter Arlos has actively lobbied for a Wahconah restoration — seeking county funds to pay for an improvement plan and mounting a drive to have a non-binding referendum placed on the November ballot asking voters if they favor seeking state funds to revitalize Wahconah.

Arlos said that the level of support since launching the referendum effort has been encouraging. [Stadium proponents] will see the strong support for Wahconah Park," Arlos predicted. "The only ones who find fault [with Wahconah] are Doyle and the Eagle."

While the new stadium project continues to move forward — the city council this week supported legislation that would form a stadium authority with eminent domain powers — discussion of Wahconah's future should a new facility be built have been sketchy.

Doyle and other stadium advocates say that Wahconah has a viable future as a city-oriented park for Legion, Babe Ruth baseball and other high school and amateur events.

At-large councilor Paul Dowd, who joked publicly that Wahconah should be demolished to make way for a helicopter pad and parking lot for Berkshire Medical Center, actually believes that the old ballpark could be an ideal complement to the



A national baseball writer calls Wahconah Park a "Berkshire Beauty" but its future is in doubt with the pending departure of the Mets in 2001 and ongoing efforts to build a new stadium.

deal of the day-to-day maintenance, including some painting, cleaning and repair efforts.

"If you don't have anyone occupying that facility, I'm just not sure if the park department has the resources," Murphy said. "Obviously, you can't put the kind of effort into the facility that we've been doing for the last 12 years. So, consequently, when you have a facility that's antiquated like Wahconah Park, it can only deteriorate."

Murphy was not surprised at the praise heaped upon Wahconah by baseball aficionados — in fact a large part of his job during the last 12 years has been to market that charm. But the park's drawbacks, he believes, outweigh its assets.

"If you're a purist and a baseball fan, [Wahconah] has a lot of charm," Murphy said. "But try being a fan when you have to hold your hand in front of your eyes for the first two or three innings. Try being a fan who has to use the restrooms which back up from time to time. Try running a business here."

Steven Valenti, a local business owner and minor league baseball advocate, agrees that Wahconah's professional baseball days are nearing an end. "It's very charming, but it's very tired," he said. "Charm only goes so far."

new facility.

"We need that for our kids, we need that for our community," Dowd said. "Can you imagine having both of these [parks] in our community? And that could happen. It would be something for everyone."

Dowd believes that, with relatively minimal city expense, the Wahconah grandstands could be replaced and other amenities upgraded. State or federal grants could be sought to pay for the lion's share of the upgrade, he added.

"There was a time when Wahconah Park was the only park for Pittsfield," Dowd said. "I played there. It served us well and it will continue to serve us well; only in a different capacity."

But Pittsfield Mets general manager Rick Murphy, a Pittsfield native, said that Wahconah requires more than a minor upgrade. Although the playing surface is in good shape, he said, restoring the infrastructure, even to host amateur events, would require "a major commitment."

In addition, Murphy said, once the Mets depart, probably following the 2001 season, the park will lack a full-time summer tenant, and could rapidly deteriorate.

Currently, the Mets handle a great



Is a multi-use stadium in downtown Pittsfield's future? Proponents took a step forward this week, winning city council approval for formation of a powerful governing authority.

As political landscape evolves, Wahconah faces unclear future

Is Wahconah Park a dilapidated hulk on the verge of collapse? Or a historic gem just waiting to be polished? It all depends on who you ask.

Mayor Gerald Doyle, Jr. has called Wahconah a money pit, and warned that those who cling to hope that the park has a future hosting professional baseball are kidding themselves — and perhaps hampering efforts to build a new park.

National Pastime, Inc. president William Gladstone bolstered Doyle's argument earlier this month when he announced that he is moving his minor league Pittsfield Mets to Troy, New York, where a new stadium is planned.

But the venerable Wahconah has its supporters — and the June issue of Money Magazine certainly must have warmed their hearts.

See WAHCONAH page 15

City voters approve measure seeking funds for Wahconah

By Tony Dobrowolski

Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — City voters last night approved Question 10, a nonbinding referendum concerning Wahconah Park's future as a minor league baseball stadium.

Unofficially, the measure passed by almost 1,100 votes, with 5,902 voters for the measure and 4,907 against — about a 55 percent to 45 percent split, with 10,809 vot-

ers weighing in on the issue.

Question 10 asked whether state Rep. Peter J. Larkin, D-Pittsfield, should be instructed to vote in favor of legislation to provide state funds to upgrade and renovate the park to meet minor league baseball franchise standards.

Although the measure passed, some 6,800 of the city's 29,193 registered voters — about 24 percent of Pittsfield's electorate — were

unable to vote on the question. The signatures on a petition that sought its placement on the ballot were collected only in the 3rd Berkshire District, which encompasses all of Pittsfield except Ward 4 and Ward 1, Precinct B.

Former Berkshire County Treasurer Peter G. Arlos, the question's sponsor and chief proponent, said the question was limited to 3rd Berkshire District bal-

lots because the district encompasses no community other than Pittsfield.

The 3rd Berkshire District covers the area where the city has talked of building an \$18.5 million multipurpose stadium on the corner of West and Center streets to replace Wahconah Park as a minor league baseball facility.

Arlos had predicted the issue would receive overwhelming ap-

proval. Last night, he called the margin of victory "a significant win."

Arlos said the win was significant because of media reports that he claimed distorted the issue.

"It shows one thing," Arlos said. "That people are opposed to the stadium. If all the people had been able to vote, the margin would've been higher."

Those who advocated a "no"

vote said the measure was irrelevant to issues surrounding minor league baseball in the city.

Wahconah Park, which has been home to several minor league baseball teams, was built in 1919. The 81-year-old park has numerous structural and space deficiencies. A 1997 study determined it would cost \$12 million to make the park conform to current minor league baseball standards.

11/8/00

Wahconah chosen for Money's 5 best parks

By Mary-Jane Tichenor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — In an ironic twist, a major national business publication has cited the city's beleaguered, deteriorating Wahconah Park as offering "the definitive old-time minor league experience."

The article appears in the June issue of Money magazine, a Time Inc. publication.

Author Paul Lucas, who calls himself a "serious baseball addict," said that Wahconah is one of his five favorite parks in the nation.

The others are John O'Donnell Stadium in Davenport, Iowa; Bowen Field in Bluefield, W.Va.; Municipal Stadium in San Jose, Calif., and The Diamond in Lake Elsinore, Calif.

Future in doubt

The future of Wahconah Park is in doubt following the decision of National Pastime Inc., holder of the city's minor league franchise, to relocate from Pittsfield to a new stadium to be built in Troy, N.Y.

Supporters, including County Treasurer Peter Arlos, are lobbying for a new study into the possibility of upgrading the facility.

On the other hand, many city officials and business leaders are throwing their weight behind proposed \$15 million multi-use stadium on the former Falcon auto dealership property off Center and West streets.

In the Money magazine article, author Lucas writes that in 1995, he stopped attending major league baseball games because "the players and owners were drowning in their own greed, the game had been merchandised and commercialized beyond all reason, and a players' strike had wiped out the 1994 World Series."

Most minor league parks offer comparable levels of intimacy, com-

WAHCONAH, continued on B4

Common from B1

similar to the vehicle in which the suspects fled, but released it shortly after.

Riello said Monday that police do not know if anyone was injured in the shooting, and they have had difficulty putting a case together because no witnesses have come forward. Police suspect the incident was drug-related, Riello said.

On Sunday evening, Michael Stabin, 19, of Pittsfield was slashed in the neck and left side of the face with a knife following an argument with a girl in the Common. Stabin received 30 stitches at Berkshire Medical Center. The cut just missed a major artery in Stabin's neck, police said.

On Wednesday, Dalton Police arrested Nelson D. Martinez, 18, at his mother's apartment on River Street and charged him with slashing Stabin. Martinez is being held on \$35,000 cash, \$350,000 surety bail, pending a court hearing Monday.

Brassard files petition

Ward 2 City Councilor James L. Brassard filed a petition at this week's City Council meeting asking for an increased police presence and additional lighting at the Common, and for the city to explore the use of surveillance equipment around the park.

"I'm probably going to ask the

city to really explore the possibilities I have listed," Brassard said.

Police had said Monday they would increase patrols in the Common.

"That's a good sign," Brassard said.

Brassard said he didn't know if it would be possible to use surveillance equipment there, but that the idea is worth exploring.

"Right now, we need to look at all the options available," Brassard said. "We have to do something. [The Common] is too valuable a piece of property in the middle of the city to let go."

Brassard will also hold an office hour at the Coltsville police substation Wednesday evening at 7 p.m., although this meeting for Ward 2 residents had been scheduled before the Common incidents occurred.

Moving skateboard park

Former city councilor Peter Arlos presented a letter to the city council this week asking the Parks Commission to move the \$36,000 skateboard park from the Common to a more secure location.

Brassard said he has received a few calls from residents who are concerned about the skateboard park.

"[Residents asked] whether or not we can do anything about it," Brassard said. "If we don't talk about it, nothing is going to be done."

6/24/00

Wahconah from B1

munity, value and fun, he said. "The best ones generally fall into two categories: Those built in the 1920s, '30s and '40s, which exude character and history, and those built in the '90s, when a design renaissance resulted in a new generation of wonderful ballparks combining modern amenities and old-school charm."

He said ballparks are typically oriented with home plate to the west and center field to the east, but Wahconah, "this rugged Berkshire beauty, built in 1919 and now home of the Pittsfield Mets, is positioned the other way around, resulting in a unique ritual: The sun sets in the batter's, catcher's and umpire's eyes on summer evenings, occasionally necessitating a sun delay."

He noted that plastic owls hang from the rafters to ward off pigeons, and fans and players mingle as they exit via the same walkway.

Tickets are priced from \$3 to \$6.75.

Accompanying his article is a list of places to stay. "Why not stay where the visiting team stays?" it proclaims.

For Wahconah, the article suggests staying at Holiday Inn at 40 Main St., North Adams, where prices are \$110 for one room with two adults and two children.



Eagle file photo

Saturday, June 24, 2000

Answers sought for Common troubles

Neighborhood meeting to discuss several options

By Tony Dobrowolski
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — A neighborhood safety awareness meeting will be held at the Elizabeth Freeman Center Tuesday night at 7 to discuss possible responses to recent acts of violence at the Common on First Street.

Both a shooting and a stabbing have taken place at the Common in the past two weeks. A range of options, from increased police patrols and additional lighting to moving the skateboard park from there, have been suggested.

Marsha Savage, the Freeman Center's executive director, said people who live near the Common have been invited to attend, but anyone is welcome.

Police Chief Anthony J. Riello will attend along with several bicycle patrol officers, and possibly other law enforcement personnel, Savage said. Riello could not be reached for comment yesterday.

The Freeman Center's Pittsfield office is located on First Street, two doors from the Common. Savage said the center, which counsels victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, decided to host the meeting because of its proximity to the violent incidents.

"When the two incidents came up, we thought it would be very strange if we didn't respond to it," Savage said.

On June 9, four shots from a 9-mm handgun were fired near the basketball courts at the Common from a car with three males in it. Two days later, police confiscated a Ford Expedition

COMMON, continued on B4



Ben Garver / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Shaun Kenney, 19, of Pittsfield performs an aerial stunt on his bicycle at the First Street Common. Officials are considering solutions to recent violent incidents at the popular recreation spot.



Shaun Kenney, 19, and Police Officer Michael Maddalena talk at the skateboard park at the First Street Common yesterday. Kenney said he has often found broken beer bottles on the ramps, remnants from drinking parties the evening before.

Stabbing at park raises fears

By Lisa Gosselin
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — By day, the Common park on First Street is filled with the playful activity of young children and teen-agers on skateboards and bicycles.

By night, though, the park has increasingly become a magnet for drug transactions, teen drinking and violence, some park users and neighbors said yesterday.

Pittsfield Police are investigating the latest violent incident in the park, a stabbing that occurred Sunday night. Michael Stabin, 19, of Pittsfield was cut in the back of the neck and on the side of the face.

Received 30 stitches

Stabin received about 30 stitches to the back of his neck and was admitted to the intensive care unit at Berkshire Medical Center overnight. He was released from the hospital yesterday afternoon.

"He was very lucky," said Police Chief Anthony J. Riello, explaining that the cut just missed a major artery in Stabin's neck.

Shaun Kenney of Pittsfield was among a group of more than a dozen bicyclists and skateboarders using the ramps in the park yesterday afternoon and visiting with Officer Michael Maddalena, who patrolled the area on bicycle.

"When they first made the park, there were two spots with lights. If they turned the lights back on, it would brighten up the park so there would not be a lot of prob-

6/19/00 COMMON, continued on A4



Cousins Josh, 3, and Antonio Salas, 7, play at the Common yesterday under the close supervision of Antonio's father, Martin Salas.

Common from A1

lems," said Kenney, who is 19.

Kenney said that neighbors, whose homes line the back of the park on Second Street, complained about teen-agers skating and riding at night, so the park, which closes at 9 p.m., is no longer lighted.

"I would rather have people riding here at night than stabbing each other," Kenney said.

Detective Peter T. McGuire interviewed Stabin yesterday afternoon and described him as "cooperative."

Stabin had been in the park during the evening on Sunday and made some derogatory comments to a woman in the park, McGuire said.

The woman left and returned around 9 p.m. with a group of friends, who allegedly dared Stabin to repeat the derogatory comments. Then one of the men said "You don't talk to my girl like that," and then grabbed Stabin and slashed the back of his neck and left side of his face with a knife, McGuire said.

"We don't know if they re-entered the park seeking [Stabin] out or not," he added.

A friend took Stabin to Berkshire Medical Center and hospital officials called police at about 9:15 p.m. to report the stabbing. Police were able to speak only briefly with the victim on Sunday night, Riello said.

The assailant is described as a

Hispanic man about 5 feet 7 inches tall who was wearing a gray, hooded sweat shirt.

"We are busy interviewing witnesses and the victim," McGuire said late yesterday afternoon. "We definitely know that it is not drug-related or gang-related," he added.

Sunday's was the second incident in the park in recent weeks. On June 9, there was a report of shots fired around 4:30 p.m. That incident took place closer to the First Street side of the park, Riello said.

Police do not know whether anyone was hit when shots were fired near the basketball courts, and no victim has come forward, he said. The incident was most likely drug-related, he said.

"It is still under investigation, but it is difficult to put a case together unless a victim and witnesses come forward," said the chief.

Meanwhile, teen-agers continued to use the skateboard park yesterday on one of the few dry days of their recently begun summer vacation. They said they do not cause trouble for neighbors and complained that it is the people who use the park after it closes who cause trouble.

Kenney said he often has found broken beer bottles on the ramps, remnants from drinking parties the evening before.

"It's going to happen anywhere, whether it's New York or Massachusetts," said one neighbor, who declined to give his name. He said

he was home when the incident occurred on Sunday but slept through it.

"I didn't hear a thing," he said, adding that the park sometimes gets noisy at night. Nevertheless, he said, the recent incidents do not concern him.

"I take care of myself," the neighbor declared.

Martin Salas, who brought his son and nephew to the park yesterday afternoon, said that he never lets the children out of his sight, although he feels safe in the Common during the day.

"The nighttime is scary," Salas said. "I don't think they do this because they are mean kids," he said of the perpetrators. "They get stupid."

Riello said that the shooting and stabbing incidents are not related.

"Over the years, there have been issues and problems in the back of the Common area. It is one of the areas we focus on, and many residents call us if there are issues," he said.

Especially at this time of year, as schools let out for the summer, police pay particular attention to the skateboard park during the day and night, Riello said.

"We will increase patrols and officers on bicycles, and we encourage neighbors to call us," he said.

Anyone with information about Sunday's incident is asked to call the Pittsfield Police Detective Bureau at 448-9705.

6/19/00

7/11/00



On the common
A child in a local Head Start class enjoys herself on playground equipment at the First Street Common in Pittsfield.

Photo by Jacob Librizzi

City may make early call to bullpen

Mets might be booted from Wahconah Park after this season

By Anthony Fyden

In a move that could clear the bases for a new minor league baseball franchise in Pittsfield, Mayor Gerald Doyle, Jr. this week sought to revoke the city's license agreement with National Pastime, Inc., the company that owns the Pittsfield Mets.

Doyle said on Tuesday that two franchises have shown serious interest in playing ball at a new downtown stadium in Pittsfield — and these teams may be willing to play baseball at Wahconah Park in 2001 while a new facility is built.

On Monday, community development director Tom Murphy briefed the park commission on Doyle's action. "This would allow us to expand our options," Murphy said. "We need to protect the city's interests."

National Pastime, Inc. in May announced plans to leave Pittsfield to play ball at a new stadium to be built in Troy, New York. The city's license agreement with National Pastime allows the franchise to play at Wahconah this



ARLOS SEEKS ANOTHER BALLOT QUESTION
See Page 21

summer, with a club option for the 2001 season.

When National Pastime president Bill Gladstone announced the move to Troy, he said that the team would move to Troy "as early" as the 2001 season — but also reiterated the team's option to play in Pittsfield.

But Murphy said that the city has the right to void the agreement — in effect eliminating National Pastime's option — and has decided to exercise that right.

The community development director added that the move to void the agreement will not necessarily prevent the Pittsfield Mets from playing at Wahconah Park in 2001, if an agreement with a new Pittsfield team has not been secured.

It is clear, however, that city officials are optimistic that a

new tenant will be in place. "There is a lot of interest from a professional team to play in Wahconah Park in 2001," Murphy said, "with the understanding that they would move to a new [Pittsfield] facility in 2002."

Murphy would not name the interested franchises, but said that "their level of baseball is comparable" to the Pittsfield Mets, which is a Class A minor league affiliate of the major league New York Mets.

The community development director emphasized that an agreement with a new franchise depends on having a new downtown stadium on track. "It is clearly understood that any new team would enter into an agreement as a tenant of the [new] stadium," he said.

Murphy, who has been the city's point man working with private interests to develop a new multipurpose facility at the corner of West & Center streets, said that the interest is encouraging.

"It's exciting, very exciting," he said. "I think that the

6/8/00
See METS page 21

The Pittsfield Gazette June 8, 2000

City may send Mets packing early

continued from page 1

history and tradition of professional baseball in Pittsfield is known throughout the baseball community. That's to our advantage."

Park commissioners, who supervise all city parks including Wahconah, voted in support of Doyle's move to revoke the license agreement.

"I think that we have to put ourselves in a positive position, here," said James Conant. "It's incumbent upon us."

Doyle noted that the city had a limited window in which to act to terminate the license agreement. "This does not exclude the Mets at all," he said. "Basically, it's a business decision and it's in accordance with our lease. We have to keep our options open. We want to do what's best for the city."

The mayor said that he apprised Pittsfield Mets general manager Rick Murphy of the city's action.

Doyle emphasized that a new team at Wahconah in 2001 would represent only a temporary reprieve for the venerable stadium. "We will have somebody willing to play [in Pittsfield], that's for sure," he said. "They're just not willing to make Wahconah Park a permanent home."

Since late last year, a private partnership, led by the Berkshire Eagle and Berkshire Bank, has been considering building a new multi-purpose stadium facility off West & Center streets — estimated to cost \$15 million to \$18 million — at the site of the former Falcon Chevrolet. The developers hold an option on the property and have been conducting "due diligence" to determine the project's feasibility.

Doyle has committed an undetermined portion of the city's \$10 million payment from General Electric, part of the "consent decree" settlement.

The city council has initially approved formation of a "civic authority," which would have broad powers, including eminent domain, to oversee the development.

Doyle said on Tuesday that he has been working with state legislators to push the approval process for

ward. He also noted that public meetings will be a part of the process, although he did not say when sessions would be held.

"It will be, basically, public meetings, seeking input," he said. "I think a lot of the questions will be answered."

National Pastime officials were not available for comment on Wednesday. Pittsfield Mets spokesperson Rick Stohr said only that the team is aware of the city revocation effort.

Ballpark license in 2001 revoked

By Erik Arvidson
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — Mayor Gerald S. Doyle Jr. has revoked the license agreement between the city and National Pastime Corp., clearing the way in case another minor league baseball franchise wants to play at Wahconah Park in 2001.

The move, Doyle said, would allow the city to aggressively pursue a baseball franchise to replace National Pastime, the owner of the Pittsfield Mets franchise, which intends to move to Troy, N.Y., possibly after this season.

Under the agreement with the city, National Pastime has an option to play at Wahconah in 2001.

Revoking the license, Doyle said, removes that option and allows the city to find a new team to sign a license agreement to play at Wahconah Park in 2001, while privately led plans for a multipurpose downtown stadium are pursued.

6/13/00
LICENSE, continued on A4

A neighborhood meeting will take place at 7 tonight at the Elizabeth Freeman Center to discuss the recent shooting and stabbing incidents.

Doyle unwilling to close skateboard park

By Tony Dobrowolski
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — Mayor Gerald S. Doyle Jr. said yesterday his office has received requests to close the skateboard park at the First Street Common.

But despite two violent incidents at the Common this month, Doyle said he has not acted on requests to close the skateboard park because he does not want to penalize everyone who uses it.

"I'd hate to do that and make the good kids suffer for a few bad kids," Doyle said while speaking to Dan Valenti on yesterday morning's "Open Mike" program on WBRK-AM 1340.

Safety at the Common has become an issue since shooting and stabbing incidents took place there this month.

On June 9, four shots from a 9 mm handgun were fired near the Common's basketball courts by three males riding in

a car. Police have yet to make an arrest in the case; they say their investigation has been hampered because no one has come forward.

Nine days later, Michael Stabin, 19, of Pittsfield was slashed on the back of the neck and left side of the face with a knife after arguing with a girl in the Common. Stabin needed 30 stitches to close his wounds, which police said just missed a major artery in his neck.

On June 21, police arrested Nelson D. Martinez, 18, at his mother's apartment in Dalton and charged him with slashing Stabin. Martinez, who has a significant juvenile record, is being held on \$35,000 cash, or \$350,000 surety bond, on charges in connection with the incident.

Ward 2 City Councilor James Brassard filed a petition at last week's City Council meeting asking for an increased police presence and additional lighting at the

Common, and for the city to explore the use of surveillance equipment around the park.

A neighborhood awareness meeting will take place at 7 tonight at the Elizabeth Freeman Center on First Street to discuss the recent incidents. Police Chief Anthony J. Riello is expected to attend.

Former City Councilor Peter Arlos also presented a letter to the City Council last week asking the Park Commission to

PARK, continued on B4

7/11
PITTSFIELD: The Department of Parks and Recreation has announced that the four playgrounds will open this Monday with playground leaders. The four playgrounds are as follows: Clapp, Common, Deming and Pitt. The hours are 9 to noon and 1 to 5 Monday through Friday. The playgrounds will be open for six weeks, closing on Friday, Aug. 11.

PITTSFIELD: The guidance

been surprised by the amount of interest shown from Class A teams looking to relocate to a modern ballpark.

One businessman with strong local connections has approached city officials and expressed interest in buying a Class A team that could be brought to Pittsfield, according to sources.

The new \$15 million to \$18 million stadium effort is being led by Berkshire Bank and the parent company of The Berkshire Eagle, which jointly hold an option for a proposed site.

The stadium would be built at the corner of West and Center streets, the site of the former Falcon Chevrolet. Although proponents envision a 5,000-seat stadium, one concept involves making the stadium expandable by 1,000 to 1,500 seats, to possibly accommodate a Class AA baseball team in the future.

The Parks Commission, which controls Wahconah Park, last week gave unanimous approval to revoking National Pastime's license agreement, as reported in The Pittsfield Gazette.

The City Council, which meets tonight at 7:30, also must vote to authorize voiding the agreement.

National Pastime President William L. Gladstone announced in May that he will move the franchise to a \$20 million stadium to be built on the campus of Hudson Valley Community College in Troy. The stadium will be completed in 2002.

6/12/00

Park from B1

move the \$36,000 skateboard park to a more secure location.

Doyle said that the slashing incident has given the city a "black eye," but that if the Common is policed properly, safety is not a problem. Doyle noted that Riello recently began posting the department's mobile command center at the Common to enhance existing security measures.

"Hopefully, what we're going to do now is focus a lot more attention, not only with the Police Department, but with park security over there," Doyle said.

Because of the Common's central location, Doyle said the city would be able to put resources at the park to make sure incidents such as the shooting and stabbing do not happen again.

He said city workers have repeatedly cleared the areas around fences adjacent to the railroad tracks on the Common, which he called "escape hatches for troublemakers."

"We put fences up there, they rip them down," Doyle said. "We had to trim the trees behind there because [kids] were on people's roofs."

"But again, it's a few that make all these kids look bad," Doyle added.

The mayor also said he plans to speak with Brassard about his petition.

"Whether we need to tighten up security or lights, we need to take care of that park as well as the residents around it," Doyle said.

Brassard told The Eagle last week that he wasn't sure what direction to go in with his petition, but that he doesn't want it to be forgotten amid city politics.

"I'm really not quite sure what to do with it yet," Brassard said. "But I don't want it to just sit. We need to act on it, and we need to act on it now."

Pittsfield council debates proposal for new study of Wahconah Park

By Erik Arvidson
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The City Council is requesting more information from the County Commission about whether the county, in the waning days of its existence, can fund a study of Wahconah Park with \$50,000 out of the county's fiscal 2000 budget.

A petition from County Treasurer Peter G. Arlos, which had been approved last week by the finance subcommittee, asked that the city request \$25,000 from the county to fund a study of the 81-year-old ballpark, as Arlos claimed that the city must show "good intentions" that it wants to keep minor league baseball here.

But councilors last night raised objections to funding another study that would duplicate a siting study that

was done in 1997 at a cost of \$30,000. That study found it would cost \$11.4 million to bring Wahconah Park up to minor league baseball standards.

Several councilors also questioned whether \$50,000 would be available out of the county's coffers, as the state has said that all of the county's assets will be applied toward the county's unfunded pension liability when county government dissolves June 30.

The council voted to refer Arlos' petition back to the Finance Committee, and to request that the county commissioners clarify whether the money will be available.

Councilor at large Matthew M. Kerwood, a Finance Committee member, said he had read the 1997 study since the Finance Committee meeting.

"In my estimation and assessment, the

\$50,000 could be appropriated out of a discretionary spending line item in the county's

3/15/00 COUNCIL, continued on B4

Council from B1

budget marked "miscellaneous."

But state Rep. Peter J. Larkin, D-Pittsfield, told The Eagle last week that "there is no money sitting unattended in the county commissioners' office" and that all of the county's funds are to be applied toward the pension liability.

Ward 1 Councilor William D. Barry said he spoke with County Commission Chairman Thomas H. Stokes after the Finance Committee meeting, and Stokes told him he wasn't aware beforehand that Arlos had petitioned the City Council saying that the county had money available for a study of Wahconah Park.

Barry said Stokes told him that all of the county's leftover funds in the budget were earmarked for the pension liability.

Barry added that he would like to see that money instead be used to fund studies associated with efforts to build a new multipurpose stadium in the area of Center Street, an effort being led by Berkshire Bank and the parent company of The Berkshire Eagle.

Council Vice President Gary S. Grunin said he was under the impression that Arlos' petition was asking for a study of Wahconah Park to have a plan in place for the park's future uses. "The petitioner said 'Even if we're going to have a new ballpark, I don't think you should just discard Wahconah Park,'" Grunin said. "Something has to be done with it, but not to the

extent of \$11 million."

Councilor at large James J. Massery said the "bigger issue is that we are considering funding that really may not exist." Massery added that he didn't think it's stadium issue, but rather a question of whether the county can grant money in its final moments of existence.

Ward 6 Councilor Daniel L. Bianchi said Wahconah Park has been "a vital part of the Wahconah Street area," and whether the park continues to be used for minor league baseball or not, there should still be a study of what is the optimum use for the park.

Councilor at large Gerald M. Lee said the city will have to undertake a study of Wahconah at some point. "Let's put the ball in [the county's] park and say, 'We want the \$50,000 for this ballpark,'" Lee said. If the county isn't able to grant the money, the city's request would be turned down, he said.

Ward 5 Councilor Richard A. Scapin said Wahconah is "a very well-equipped park and it feels in excellent shape," and is adequate for community uses even if it's unfit for minor league use. Scapin added that the city has qualified personnel who can tell the city what kind of uses are appropriate for Wahconah Park.

Arlos' original petition called for \$25,000 to fund a feasibility study. But the Finance Committee adjusted Arlos' petition to request \$50,000 from the county, as councilors thought \$25,000 wouldn't be adequate.

3/15/00

Doyle: New ballpark key to keeping team

By Greg Sukiennik
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The working concept for a new multipurpose stadium on the site of the former Falcon auto dealership has been scaled back to 5,000 seats, and Mayor Gerald S. Doyle Jr. is suggesting the city could use part of its economic settlement with GE to assist the project, presently estimated at between \$15 and \$18 million.

Doyle also said yesterday that he believes spending money on Wahconah Park would not only be a waste of money, but would not insure that Pittsfield would keep its minor league baseball franchise.

"If you go down there today, there are ducks in the parking lot," he said yesterday, referring to the standing water in the lot. "The facility is antiquated. It's a money pit."

Furthermore, Doyle said, officials of National Pastime Inc., which owns the minor league franchise that has played baseball here since 1989, have hinted that

they are not interested in playing in Wahconah Park beyond the upcoming season.

Asked about Doyle's comment yesterday, team general manager and part owner Richard Murphy said the franchise has a lease for Wahconah Park through the 2000 season and an option for 2001. However, in the past few years franchise President William L. Gladstone has expressed concerns about the viability of Wahconah as a long-term home and said his willingness to sign a long-term lease could hinge on a new facility.

The mayor spoke at a media briefing on a visit Doyle and members of the business group promoting the stadium made to Lowell, a city which recently built a new stadium for its minor league team. While proponents have visited stadiums in Bridgeport, Conn., and Erie, Pa., the Lowell stadium is most similar in size to what proponents want to build here. Also, the Lowell team plays in the same league as

3/16/00 STADIUM, continued on A4

Stadium from A1

Pittsfield

Berkshire Bank and MediaNews Group, the corporate owner of The Berkshire Eagle, have formed a limited liability partnership and taken out a \$60,000 option to purchase the former Falcon property. Others playing a major role are Mick Callahan, president of the Callahan Cos., and Ronald Griffin, the head of EDM Services, an architecture and design firm. Griffin is donating his services for design of the facility.

"We want to expand business in this city, and everything we do we want to be sensitive to those businesses [on and near the stadium site]," Murphy said.

The two sketches call for 5,000 seats, which is down from initial projections of a 6,500-seat stadium.

Asked about The Eagle's interest in the project, Mick said the company's involvement was first raised because it owns the parking lot between the Falcon dealership and Pittsfield Tire and Auto Service Center.

Later, MediaNews President William Dean Singleton was approached and offered to contribute \$2 million toward the project, not including the value of land the company might donate.

While the worth of Clock Tower

yesterday said they don't know the number of properties or how much the acquisitions will cost because they don't yet know exactly where the stadium will be situated.

Murphy showed reporters two preliminary sketches. One would have the grandstand kitty-cornered where Worthington, Center and West Housatonic streets converge. Another would place the field and grandstand at the corner of South Church and Center streets.

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While the worth of Clock Tower

3/16/00

The Pittsfield Gazette March 30, 2000

Arlos continues to pursue master plan for Wahconah Park

By Anthony Fyden

Is county money available to pay for development of a Wahconah Park "master plan?"

It might be. But county treasurer Peter Arlos on Wednesday failed in a bid to "set aside" \$25,000 in county funds for Pittsfield to hire a consultant to create a five-year renewal plan for the ballpark.

Arlos petitioned the county commission to set aside the funds "to put an end to the irresponsible and unfounded assertions that the county has no money available for the study."

Arlos had previously petitioned the city council, suggesting the city apply to the county for a \$25,000 grant to fund a Wahconah "master

plan."

The council's finance subcommittee at first enthusiastically embraced the concept — in fact increasing the amount to \$50,000.

But councilors later backed off and Arlos' petition was again referred to the finance subcommittee.

On Wednesday, Arlos said that the issue has been clouded by "false statements." He noted that his original petition sought \$25,000, not \$50,000.

Cash available

Arlos also objected to assertions that the county lacks the money to pay for the study. He said that, as of March 27, the county had more than \$340,000 available.

Another \$155,805 is anticipated in rent on the courthouse and accounts are expected to earn \$15,000 in interest for March.

"I'm the county treasurer, I say the money's there," he said. "They never called me."

Arlos also contends that a review of potential sites for a downtown

stadium, conducted in 1997, did not constitute a study of the feasibility of a Wahconah restoration. "This is no master plan, this is just for sites," he said.

But county commissioner Tom Stokes argued that Arlos' petition was premature.

Stokes said that the state has not yet approved the county's budget, adding that the state is carefully scrutinizing expenditures.

"When the budget is approved, we'll be in a better position to know whether a project like this is viable or not," Stokes said. "Right now we're dealing with a lot of unknowns in terms of the budget."

Arlos said that he was not asking for the funds to be appropriated, only set aside so that the city could make an application. Once an application is made, Arlos said, commissioners can determine whether or not it has merit.

Stokes said that the Wahconah study issue may be brought up again.

Arlos also contends that a review of potential sites for a downtown

months prior to the abrogation of county government, which is set for July 1.

Reversal alleged

The argument between Arlos and Stokes grew heated, with Arlos charging that Stokes had encouraged the petition and then backed out.

"I'm disgusted with you, setting me up like this, playing this game," Arlos said.

Stokes then moved to table the petition, which was supported by commissioners Bob Melle and Ron Kitterman.

Later, Stokes said that he was "somewhat insulted" by Arlos comments. Stokes said that he had discussed the concept of petitioning the commission with Arlos, but only in the context of "protocol."

Arlos maintained that "[Stokes] asked me to put the petition in."

Melle said that the Wahconah study issue may be brought up again.

"If it is a worthwhile project, it can be brought up once [budget] approval is obtained," he said.

Onota drawdown to begin Oct. 16

PITTSFIELD — The Onota Lake drawdown will begin on Monday, Oct. 16.

According to the City's Order of Conditions from the Conservation Commission, the lake shall be drawn down no more than one foot below the spillway by Nov. 1. From this date, the drawdown shall continue until the lake is approximately three feet below the spillway elevation.

It is anticipated that this elevation will be reached by mid-to late-November, weather permitting. The lake will remain at this elevation throughout the winter months, with refill beginning around March 15, 2001. According to the City's Order of Conditions from the Conservation Commission, the lake must be refilled by April 15, 2001.

Any questions regarding the drawdown should be directed to the Parks Department at 499-9343.

10/19/00



By land and by lake

Despite rain and cool weather, fishermen bundled up and went to Onota Lake yesterday, where they tried their luck from the fishing pier, from the rocky shore and from a boat.

4/4/00

Recreational advocates tout new priorities for Pittsfield's parks

More than two dozen residents attended a parks commission hearing Monday at Williams School to offer input for a five-year master plan.

The bulk of the attendees came in support of the Berkshire Bike Path Council, a volunteer group campaigning for a countywide route for bicyclists, pedestrians and other recreational users.

After two sparsely attended public hearings, parks commission chairman Anthony Massimiano expressed delight over Monday's attendance and barrage of ideas.

"This is really great that you're all here," he said. "This is the best attended meeting by far."

Planning and grants

Massimiano said that the commission is gathering input to help update a detailed report listing parks and goals. "The purpose is so we can set priorities in five year increments and qualify for grants," he said.

Community services director Bob Mellace said that the final report will include "an inventory of all the different resources [the city] owns." The report also will list what the city wants to see happen in the parks.

"The idea is to get a better idea of what the community wants, to guide planning and help attract grants," he said.

The last five-year master plan, he noted, boosted the city's applications for funds to improve Burbank Park. The city obtained more than one half million dollars in state grants for Burbank Park.

Marjorie Cohan, president of the bike path council, said her group wants their project embraced by city officials. She noted that Mayor Gerald Doyle, Jr. has signed on as a board member.

"We're going inch by inch," Cohan said of the processing of mapping out an official bike path.

In addition to the Pittsfield group, subcommittees are now working in Stockbridge, Lenox and Clarksburg.

"There's a tremendous amount of positive energy," she said.

The group feels that the bike path can be "a north-south connector, a greenway."

Bike path benefits

In Pittsfield they envision a designated, paved path through park properties and other sites, as well as bike lanes on connecting streets.

Cohan said that the bike path will preserve the region's environment, conserve energy, provide health benefits and improve residents' quality of life.

Robert Blanchard, another member of the group, displayed a map showing possible routing through parts of Pittsfield.

In the northeast section of the city, the path would connect with the southern end of the planned Ashuwillticook Path that goes through the Adams-Cheshire corridor.

From the Berkshire Mall, the Pittsfield route could proceed down Benedict and Crane avenues, hooking up with a connector through Springside Park and the Reid Middle

School property. The path could connect to Burbank Park and Onota Lake via Wahconah Park and adjacent roads.

Other loops are envisioned off Merrill Road, around Clapp Park, through Brattlebrook Park, near Richmond Pond and from Kirvin Park south.

"There's a lot that has to be worked out," said Blanchard.

Near Silver Lake

One possibility that intrigues the committee is the prospect of building the path into the redevelopment of the GE Brownfields property.

"We're talking about a path through what is going to be an industrial development," said Blanchard, "but it doesn't have to be an ugly development."

Cohan stated that one role for the path network would be to link segments of the city. For aesthetic and financial reasons, the path needn't just be a rural route, she said.

"A very important part of getting [grant] money is to be an alternative transportation route," she said.

Parks commissioners said they will be happy to include the project in the master plan and to work with the group.

"It's an appropriate goal," said Massimiano, who also noted that the commission only controls park land — not streets, private property or some lands under the jurisdiction of the conservation commission.

Cohan said that the council is collaborating with many officials and organizations as it develops plans. "It's just a really nice piece to do it together," she said.

Boathouse for scullers

While the majority of attendees at Monday's hearing came to show support for the bike path, residents offered other ideas for the commission's consideration.

Holly Brouker of the Berkshire Sculling Association asked the board to support the erection of a boating house or similar structure at Onota Lake.

"People are coming from everywhere [to learn sculling]," she said. Currently the group functions in nomadic fashion, without a permanent base.

The majority of its programs take place at Stockbridge Bowl, with limited activity at Onota.

"Onota is the biggest lake and the easiest to have a large boat on," Brouker said.

Promotional map

Stephen Ricci suggested aesthetic improvements such as period lighting at select parks as well as a more unified effort to promote the park system.

"Pittsfield has a great park system," said the real estate agent. "When I show people houses, I convince them Pittsfield's park system is something they want to have available."

Ricci proposed the publication of a colorful brochure with a map listing the city's parks. "We could promote it as 'Pittsfield: City of Parks,'" he said. "That's a nice message to get

out there to enhance the city's image."

Ricci also advocated seeking new parks and playgrounds in "underserved, interconnected neighborhoods."

Clapp Park power

Dan O'Connell suggested extending electrical connections at Clapp Park so that a stage could be set up at the West Housatonic Street track, creating a natural amphitheater where people could sit on the hillside.

O'Connell also advocated erecting site landscape sculpture "on parkland along major routes" to let visitors see that Pittsfield is a community that embraces art.

Other suggestions made by speakers at the meeting included:

- creating a public garden & amphitheater downtown
- encouraging use of park land for community gardens
- promoting the planting of more trees throughout the city.



Robert Blanchard and other Berkshire Bike Path advocates on Monday urged parks commissioners to prioritize participation in this countywide initiative.

The Pittsfield Gazette March 23, 2000

Park planning

Jim McGrath hopes Arboretum group maps productive route

By Anthony Fyden

Creation of a thriving arboretum at Springside Park was a dream of the late Vincent Hebert, and the long-time city park advocate lived to see the dream begin to take root.

The arboretum's future growth is now in the hands of a volunteer group, which is preparing to take the project to the next level.

"Our vision is to create a world-class arboretum at Springside Park," says Jim McGrath, the president of the Vincent Hebert Arboretum. "We

corporated status and begin fundraising. And, utilizing a grant from Pittsfield Generating, Inc., the arboretum group will contract with the Conway School of Landscape Design to create a "master plan" for the arboretum.

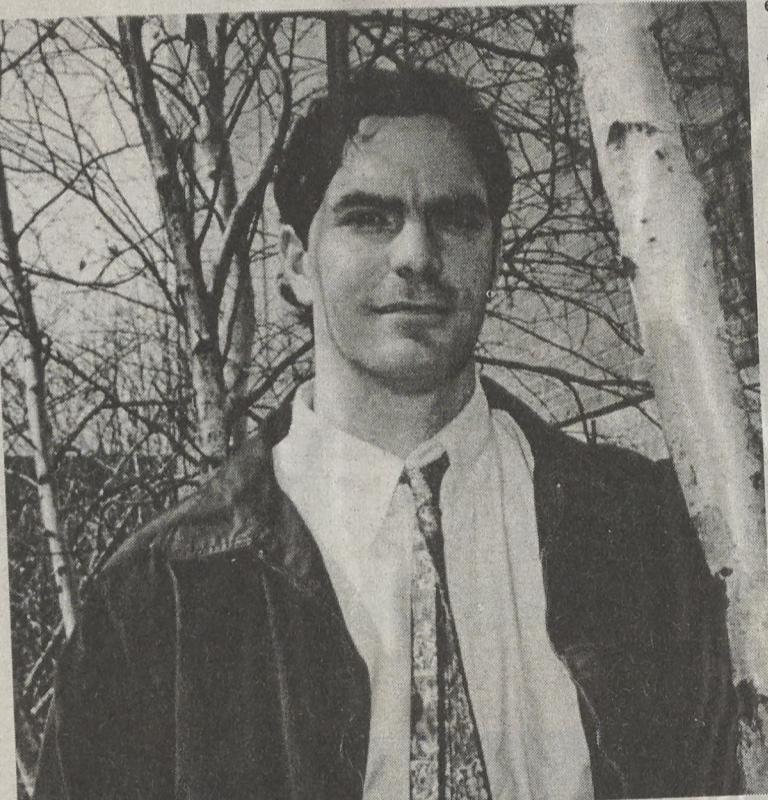
McGrath expects the master plan process to kick off in April and be complete by July. At that point, he said, the group plans to hold a series of community meetings to gather input and support from the community, particularly the residents who live in neighborhoods surrounding the expansive park.

McGrath emphasized that the goal is not to radically alter Springside, but to enhance the setting with plantings, trails and groves. One of the reasons that the group has set its sights on Springside is that members believe that the basis for an arboretum exists in a mostly natural state.

"What we're really trying to do is enhance the beauty of trees and plantings at Springside for the enjoyment of the community," McGrath said.

Although the arboretum concept has been evolving for several years, McGrath and other supporters believe that the time is right to take a more formalized approach.

The group, which has operated under the auspices of Pittsfield Beautiful, plans to achieve non-profit in-



Jim McGrath and other volunteers hope to create a "world class" arboretum, honoring the late Vincent Hebert, at Springside Park.

Members have also held park cleanup and pruning sessions along with bridge and trail work. The group

hooked.

"That sort of sparked my interest," he said. "In an urban setting, people do really need to be connected to the landscape; and I think that's what Springside offers."

In addition to his work as a planner, McGrath, who is a native of New Hampshire, has a background in for-

estry.

One challenge for the organization will be to work cooperatively with other groups which have an interest in Springside. The park is home to the Springside Greenhouse Group and the Friends of Springside Park.

The city's parks commission has final jurisdiction over Springside and any enhancements must be cleared through this board. McGrath said that, so far, the parks commission has been "totally supportive."

Outreach efforts to other organizations, he added, will be ongoing. "These are all volunteer efforts and we're all working within a city park," McGrath said. "What we're trying to do is foster partnerships. We're kind of a newly formed board and we're trying to make sure that this is a united effort. We're reaching out to the community."

McGrath believes that as people learn more about the potential for a renewed Springside Park, support for initiatives such as the arboretum will grow.

He also believes that a renewed Springside would complement a city on the rebound. "I'm a real advocate for this city," McGrath said. "I think that there is a lot of potential in Pittsfield."

For more information on the Arboretum project, call the parks department at 443-9343 or visit the Arboretum group web site at www.vgernet.net/nee/

Arlos determined to secure \$50,000 study of ballpark

By Erik Arvidson
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — County Commissioner Thomas H. Stokes yesterday rejected the idea that the county can spend \$50,000 of its fiscal 2000 budget on a study of Wahconah Park, and said he doubted county officials would support such discretionary spending.

But County Treasurer Peter G. Arlos, who proposed the study, remained firm yesterday that the county budget is accumulating a large surplus and that the statute doesn't specifically say that county funds have to be reserved for its liabilities.

The finance subcommittee of the City Council is considering a petition from Arlos

that the city request \$50,000 from the county to develop a five-year master plan to upgrade Wahconah Park to minor league baseball standards.

Stokes said if the County Commission wanted to fund such a study, the county commissioners would have to propose that to the executive committee of the county advisory board, then to the full county advisory board. The plan would also have to be approved by the state Executive Office of Administration and Finance, which is still reviewing the county's fiscal 2000 budget.

"To be honest with you, I don't think it's likely to happen," Stokes said. "It's not that

COUNTY, continued on A4

The Pittsfield Gazette July 20, 2000

Elfuns plan Burbank Park work bee

Burbank Park is in line for a \$65,000 upgrade — including a complete overhaul of the Controy Pavilion and installation of new playground equipment — courtesy of the General Electric Elfuns.

The community service organization, comprised of GE employees and retirees, has selected Burbank Park as the target of its annual "Share to Gain" project. Each year, the group undertakes a one-day work project involving as many as 200 members in a major effort.

Elfun representatives on Monday briefed the parks commission on their plans. A tentative work date of September 16 has been set, according to Elfun representative Dennis Arseneau.

The refurbishment of the Controy Pavilion will include a new kitchen and substantial repairs to the ceiling and walls. "It's in pretty bad shape," Arseneau said. "It's our hope during that one day to completely renovate it ... completely redoing the building from top to bottom."

The work will also include installation of an overhead door, which will allow for more convenient storage and access to picnic tables during events.

The installation of playground equipment will likely feature two areas; one for youngsters 2-5 years old and another section for older children.

A third phase of the project will see repair and landscaping to the old pumping station area.

Parks commission chairman Robert Smith, who first approached



Burbank Park on Onota Lake offers a sandy beach, playgrounds, walking trails and picnic areas — all for free. Christopher York, 5, enjoyed the park this past week.

Icing on the cake

Budget cuts prevented the entire upgrade from being completed. "I think this is going to be the icing on the cake," Smith said.

The commission voiced both support and gratitude for the Elfuns project, but officials requested that the group alter their plans slightly to include metal or plastic instead of wooden playground equipment.

Park maintenance supervisor Anthony Stracuzzi said that while the wooden structures may be more aesthetically pleasing, they often cause splinters and are more susceptible to

vandalism than metal structures.

The Elfun representatives agreed to work with community services director Robert Mellace on suitable alternatives.

Although the Elfuns plan to spend \$65,000 on materials, the actual investment is much greater when the cost of labor and planning is considered.

Arseneau said that the annual work project provides an opportunity for GE employees to give back to the community. Many employees travel often during the year and do not have the chance for regular volunteer activities.

Past efforts have included major renovations to the Kids' Place advocacy center, the Red Cross homeless shelter and the Catholic Youth Center's summer camp.

Answering a reporter's question about Arlos' petition, Stokes said, "The treasurer has many ideas, and that's fine for him to be pursuing those ideas. The county has to approve it for it to go anywhere."

County from A1

we're against helping Pittsfield or a study of Wahconah Park, but there's a process we have to go through. It would be the advisory board's call.

"My guess is there would be strong sentiment toward reserving any additional money we might have toward the reduction of county liabilities."

When the county government dissolves on June 30, all of its assets will be credited toward the county's unfunded pension liability for its retirees, Stokes said.

Arlos, a former city councilor, contended that the county currently has a \$319,000 surplus which will continue to grow once the county receives its rental reimbursement of approximately \$75,000 from the state and from county assessment revenue. The county budget account also earned \$10,000 in interest in February, Arlos said.

"The money is here. The money was here for all the other communities. And the county certainly had no qualms about giving out hundreds of thousands of dollars to other communities," Arlos said.

Arlos was referring to a Jan. 20 advisory board meeting, when the board approved \$100,000 in grants for projects in several communities and \$300,000 toward the purchase of Hoosac Lake in Cheshire from its private owner.

He added, "Show me where in the statute that it says all the money you have left over has to go to the liability."

Arlos said the city of Pittsfield provides 28 percent of the county budget but has its own pension system for its employees, so it doesn't benefit from the lowering of the pension liability.

Stokes said the county has "contributed significantly to Pittsfield," including funding a study of Pontoosuc Lake and to upgrade Pontoosuc Park. "We're not ignoring Pittsfield in the budget," he said.

While Arlos has proposed taking the \$50,000 from an account marked "miscellaneous," Stokes argued that that account was started to retire county liabilities.

He added that the joint purchase of Hoosac Lake would benefit the county because once the lake is turned over to the state as an asset, 75 percent of the lake's valuation will be counted toward the liability. The lake has been assessed at \$570,000.

Answering a reporter's question about Arlos' petition, Stokes said, "The treasurer has many ideas, and that's fine for him to be pursuing those ideas. The county has to approve it for it to go anywhere."

Will push for study

Arlos said he will attend the next finance subcommittee meeting to push for the study. "If we don't care for our past, we can't hope for our future," he said.

City councilors last week referred Arlos' petition back to committee, with some insisting that a new study would only duplicate a 1997 siting study, which found it would cost \$11.4 million to bring Wahconah Park up to minor league baseball standards.

Other councilors said they agreed with Arlos that there should be a study of the 81-year-old ballpark for future uses, even if efforts are successful in building a 5,000-seat multipurpose stadium near Center Street.

That effort is being led by Berkshire Bank and New England Newspapers Inc., a subsidiary of MediaNews Group, which owns The Berkshire Eagle.

Arlos said public officials should be more up-front about why they oppose a study of Wahconah Park.

"Don't invent things. Say, 'We don't want to step on the toes of The Eagle.' Be honest. Be straightforward," Arlos said.

Arlos initially proposed using \$25,000 of county money to fund the study, but the finance subcommittee raised the amount to \$50,000, which members thought would be sufficient.



Parks commissioners Cliff Nilan, Bob Smith and James Conant held a public hearing Monday to gather input on community needs. Two residents offered ideas during the session at Conte Community School.

Residents at hearing cite bike path, playground need

A bike path through Pittsfield and a playground in the Bartlett Avenue area were advocated by residents during a public hearing this week.

The park commission on Monday held the second of four planned meetings to gather public input on Pittsfield's park and recreational needs.

During the session at Conte Community School, Bonnie Sondrini asked commissioners to incorporate a citywide bike route into their five-year plan.

"There are so many beautiful places in Pittsfield that would be great for skates, bike riding and strollers," said Sondrini.

She suggested commissioners collaborate with those working to create a countywide bike path, perhaps incorporating park land into the route.

"We're all in favor of the bike path," said commissioner Cliff Nilan, who noted that a route will need to be identified before any commitment could be made.

Community services director Bob Mellace said that the lack of a clear route with connected property makes the project challenging. "No real corridor has been officially established," he said.

Mellace added that pursuing the bike path concept and collaborating with project advocates is suitable for inclusion in the commission's goals, though he added that funding such a venture may prove difficult.

Bartlett Avenue need

Amy Taylor said she recently moved back to Pittsfield. "What I want," she said, "is a playground in our neighborhood."

Taylor said that many youngsters in the Bartlett Avenue area could be served if the city develops a small playground. She suggested exploring property at or near Veterans' Park on South Street.

Nilan said the goal is a good one. He said that commissioners will broach the topic with Mayor Gerald Doyle Jr. to see if any city-owned land is available in the neighborhood.

Sondrini and Taylor were the only speakers during the public hearing. The commission will next solicit input Monday, April 3 at 7 p.m. at Williams School.

A final hearing will be scheduled for April at the Froio Senior Center.

Mellace and community development planner David Hathaway will work to incorporate the public comments — as well as input from commissioners — into an upcoming update of the parks' master plan. The document is used to identify priorities and apply for grants.

Kowing group gets boathouse license

The parks commission voted 4-0 complexities involved.

Cuyler said that interest in a community rowing program is strong, with students from Lenox schools already informally participating.

"The community rowing program has come together quickly, but we don't have the infrastructure in place," he said. "The needs for the boathouse has really increased... We are really excited about this."

Members of the group first proposed the project last spring.

"We appreciate the encouragement we've received," said president Lew Cuyler, "but we did realize the

officials prefer issuing a license.

Cuyler said the primary need for the building is to store the 45-foot rowing shells. "We need a building, we need a headquarters," he said.

Community services director Bob Mellace said that a licensing agreement — comparable to that employed for Wahconah Park — allows a primary user to invest in a site, but retains the city's control over scheduling and maintenance.

The license agreement will be drafted by the city solicitor's staff.

The Pittsfield Park Commissioners discussed at a meeting last night the acquisition of an automatic scoreboard for baseball and football at Wahconah Park. The scoreboard would cost \$1,800.

4/11/00

3/18/00

Friday, May 19, 2000

National Pastime Inc. announced last week it would move its minor league franchise to Troy.

Arlos says petitions show support for renovation of Wahconah Park

By Erik Arvidson
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — County Treasurer Peter G. Arlos said the hundreds of signatures he has received supporting a large-scale renovation of Wahconah Park are evidence that the public isn't ready to bulldoze a historical resource.

Arlos said he has gathered more than the 200 signatures necessary to put a nonbinding public policy question on the November ballot asking voters in the district comprising most of Pittsfield whether they would support seeking state historic preservation funds to make Wahconah Park suitable for minor league baseball.

5/18/00 PARK, continued on B4

Park from B1

state funds to upgrade and renovate Wahconah Park to meet minor league baseball franchise standards?

A former city councilor, Arlos insisted there is true grassroots support for his question, while proponents of a new multipurpose stadium in the downtown consist mainly of private companies and city officials who haven't gauged community support.

The "Save Wahconah Park" campaign was launched last week, just days after news that National Pastime Inc., the owner of the minor league baseball franchise in Pittsfield, would relocate to Troy, N.Y., in 2001.

The City Council last Tuesday also approved a controversial petition submitted by Arlos to have the council request \$25,000 from the county commissioners to fund a five-year master plan for the 80-year-old Wahconah Park, where the Pittsfield Mets have played since 1989 and which might be dormant after this season.

The point of the petition will be to demonstrate that there is real public support for trying to save Wahconah Park, despite the fact that many of its business offices and team facilities are undersized and the stadium seating is old. In addition, the parking lot often floods because the stadium lies in the river's flood plain, and the field is positioned so that the sun sets over center field, blinding players.

"If the private people want to build a new stadium, that's all well and good," Arlos said. "I do have an objection to putting people out of business" for the sake of a new stadium, he added.

Arlos believes that if voters were given the chance, they would strongly vote against the proposed location of the new stadium, at the corner of West and Center streets. He cited a 1997 nonbinding ballot referendum in which a question asking if the city should pursue building a new stadium was defeated in all seven wards.

Despite the fact that the referendum asked if "city funds" should be used for a new stadium, which proponents of a new stadium aren't pursuing, Arlos said there is less support for a new stadium now because of the proposed location.

A number of commercial and residential properties are within the proposed stadium's footprint, and the project may require the taking of taxable property, Arlos said.

Arlos also cited the disruption on that area of town that the new stadium would have. "Do you think the Big Y wants those loudspeakers right next to them? Can you imagine the loudspeakers in that neighborhood, affecting the people who dine out and the people up at the hotel?" 5/18/00

State says no to funding for ballpark study

By Erik Arvidson
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The following question will appear on the ballot of the 3rd Berkshire District, which is the district of state Rep. Peter J. Larkin, D-Pittsfield: "Shall the representative from this district be instructed to vote in favor of legislation to provide

useful in telling city officials how to upgrade the park in increments over five years, Arlos contend.

According to Forman, after the county's advisory board met earlier this year and made a spate of money transfers to fund several pet community projects, his office received letters from officials in several towns that didn't participate in the funding spree. "They were criticizing the advisory board for just giving money away to the towns," he said.

The original fiscal 2000 budget for the county included approximately \$150,000 for cleanup of PCBs in the Housatonic River, Forman said.

However, that item was later withdrawn and the advisory board

"came in with a wish list of local projects. And the wish list miraculously matched to the dollar the amount budgeted for the cleanup. It looked like an effort to get rid of some available cash, and it raised some eyebrows," Forman said.

Arlos proposed the Wahconah grant after the advisory board meeting. Although Arlos' intention for the grant was to make the 80-year-old park suitable for minor league baseball, most members of the Pittsfield City Council said Wahconah Park is too outdated and that repairing it would be cost-prohibitive.

When the City Council voted in favor of requesting the grant from the county, councilors said the study should focus on uses of Wahconah Park other than professional baseball. They cited the fact that officials at National Pastime Inc., the owner of the minor league baseball franchise in Pittsfield, had said Wahconah Park was beyond the point of being acceptable to minor league standards.

The board is now reviewing several spending requests from the county commissioners, including a proposal to give the 10 county employees who will be unemployed as of July 1 a severance package to compensate for unused vacation time.

While \$25,000 was a small amount of money, the proposal

BALLPARK, continued on B4

Ballpark from B1

touched off a lengthy debate by the council over the long-term use of the park.

And when National Pastime President William Gladstone announced he was moving the franchise to Troy, N.Y., he said it was "discouraging" to read that the council was considering Arlos' petition, despite Gladstone's own comments about the state of the park.

The discussion came amid efforts to build a \$15 million to \$18 million multipurpose stadium near the downtown, an effort being led by Berkshire Bank and the parent company of The Berkshire Eagle.

The Pittsfield Mets, the Class A affiliate of the New York Mets, will play at Wahconah through this season.

Arlos could not be reached for reaction to Forman's comments.

County Commission Chairman Robert H. Melle said the County Commission is trying to get approval of a severance package for the 10 county employees who will be out of the job once county government dissolves.

When they retire, state employ-

ees get paid 20 percent of their unused vacation time, which Melle said the County Commission is trying to get for those employees to keep them from using accrued vacation time in the last weeks of their employment.

"We're asking those employees to stay to the end of the road and wrap up county business. We'd rather see them get a severance package than see them call in sick the last three weeks," Melle said.

The 10 employees include two in the treasurer's office, three clerical workers in the county commissioners' office, two county engineers, and two employees in the county Clean Lakes program.

Melle said the severance package will come up when the County Commission meets next week.

The appropriations still under review by the state include \$150,000 as the county's share of the purchase of Hoosac Lake in Cheshire, a grant to North Adams to fund cleanup of Windsor Lake, the Adams Municipal Improvement Park Project, the Clarksburg Municipal Improvement Park Project, and the South County Community Improvement Project Fund.

When they retire, state employ-

Council endorses study of ballpark

By Erik Arvidson
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The City Council Tuesday voted 7-4 in favor of a proposal to request \$25,000 from the County Commission to fund a five-year "master plan" for Wahconah Park that would identify uses for the park other than professional baseball.

Supporters said that 80-year-old Wahconah Park, even in its deteriorating condition, could be greatly improved if a consultant would take a fresh look at it. Councilors who opposed it said \$25,000 could be better used for something other than an open-ended study.

Editorial assault

Council President Thomas E. Hickey Jr., who supported the petition, said members of the council's Finance Committee had been unfairly "beat up" in the editorial pages of The Eagle after the committee approved the petition last month.

Hickey said that when the committee members approved the request, they recommended that the request for proposals on the study specify that the consultant identify what games or community events could be held at Wahconah Park, "excluding the use for professional baseball."

Hickey added that he didn't think any councilor believed that another minor league team could be attracted to play at Wahconah Park after the Pittsfield Mets leave next year, and that the issue with the study wasn't about rebuilding Wahconah Park to rival the proposal for a new multipurpose stadium.

The petition came from Berkshire County Treasurer Peter G. Arlos, who said the city has no plan in place to

COUNCIL, continued on B4

Council from B1

maintain Wahconah Park to a standard fit for high school sports or other events.

But Pittsfield Mayor Gerald S. Doyle Jr. has vowed that the petition will be dead on arrival when he considers it as Pittsfield's representative to the county's advisory board, which must consider any supplemental appropriation.

Ward 5 Councilor Richard A. Scapin said that he was "one of the biggest advocates for Wahconah Park," but added that the city has qualified staff members, including Robert S. Mellace, the director of community services, and the parks commissioners, who could tell the council what events are suitable at Wahconah. "I think it's a waste of money. If the county government gives us \$25,000, we'll take it, for swingsets or something."

Ward 1 Councilor William D. Barry said he would rather see the county spend the \$25,000 on more worthy projects, such as making the courthouse handicapped-accessible.

Council Vice President Gary S. Grunin, who represents Ward 4, said the petition "seems to be getting blown way out of proportion," adding that the petition "has nothing to do with minor league baseball."

Ward 6 Councilor Daniel L.

Bianchi, who supported the petition, said the councilors "should all be supportive of a new idea, but we should also be supportive of an old friend in Wahconah Park."

Ward 7 Councilor Joseph O. Guzzo, in whose ward Wahconah Park is located, said the park "is and will continue to be a viable part of what goes on in the city of Pittsfield."

Guzzo added, "If this \$25,000 is going to keep the focus on the park and the neighborhoods, then that's money well spent."

Councilor at large Paul M. Dowd also agreed that \$25,000 spent on an "obsolete" ballpark was wasteful. "Why do we have to take \$25,000 to pay someone to tell us what we can use it for? Let's not get caught up in the history. Pittsfield is too old. The buildings are too old. They're spooky. [Wahconah] saw its day."

Voting in favor of the petition were councilors at large Matthew M. Kerwood, Daniel L. Bianchi and Gerald M. Lee, Ward 2 Councilor James L. Brassard, and councilors Hickey, Grunin and Guzzo.

Layoff comments

A large contingent from the School Department, including teachers and their families, packed the council chambers during the meeting to support the 105 nontenured teachers and five school administrators who were given termination notices nearly two weeks ago.

Sheila Irvin, president of the United Educators of Pittsfield, was loudly applauded after she told the council that the crisis with the city's employee health insurance program shouldn't be balanced on the backs of the employees.

"Pittsfield simply cannot afford a 20 percent reduction in teachers at a time of education reform and high-stakes assessment," Irvin said.

Linda Bellmore, president of the Parent-Teacher Organization at Egremont Elementary School, said many teachers and parents to whom she has spoken wouldn't object to another property tax increase to restore the laid-off teachers.

"A quality, well-rounded education creates a quality, well-rounded citizen, and we think that's the citizen Pittsfield would want," Bellmore said.

In other business, the council unanimously approved a petition from Bianchi to recommend Doyle set up a task force to analyze the crisis in the employee health insurance fund. The three-to-five-member group would analyze the history of the problem, define the causes and develop a plan to reduce the costs.

5/11/00

City will harvest weed equipment

The spoils of county government abrogation will apparently include the transfer of more than \$1 million worth of "clean lakes" weed harvesting equipment to the City of Pittsfield, county commissioners decided on Wednesday.

With Berkshire County government slated to end on June 30, commissioners had been considering for several months what to do with a veritable fleet of equipment used primarily to prevent weeds from choking area lakes.

On Wednesday, a "study group" voted to recommend to county commissioners that the equipment be transferred to the City of Pittsfield, with certain conditions. The county commissioners later voiced "general consensus" support for the transfer, but decided not to officially vote until an advisory board had been appraised and specific wording of the transfer was ironed out.

3/30/80 See WEEDS page 7



Let go of Wahconah Park

Will it be necessary to bulldoze Wahconah Park before the City Council stops using it as an excuse to avoid what needs to be done? A study has revealed that Wahconah Park is beyond useful, cost-efficient rehabilitation — period. A desperately needed new multi-purpose ballpark would make Wahconah Park redundant, and if there is sentiment to keep it around there are groups in place, as Ward 5 Councilor Richard Scapin has pointed out, that can determine if it has any worth. Not a penny of city, county, state or federal money should be spent on a study of Wahconah Park or its "rehabilitation." Happily, Mayor Gerald S. Doyle has promised that he will block the request for \$25,000 in county funds for the pointless study from his position as the city's representative to the county advisory board, but the Council majority doesn't grasp that, inadvertently or not, it is creating the unfortunate perception that it will not let go of antiquated Wahconah Park when a new ballpark is clearly needed. If the council spent as much

time and energy on trying to find ways of making a new park a reality as it wastes on Wahconah Park, the city would be that much closer to recovering from the inexcusable loss of its minor league baseball team.

Parks Dept. seeks Christmas tree

PITTSFIELD — The Department of Community Services-Parks and Recreation is seeking the donation of an evergreen tree for use as the city's official Christmas tree at Park Square.

Those with an appropriate tree to donate should call the department at 499-9343 no later than Nov. 3.

Criteria used in selecting the tree are a minimum height of approximately 30 feet; superior shape; ease of access for cutting; adequate room to safely fall the tree, and ease of transporting it.

In cooperation with the city's Department of Emergency Management, screening and selection will take place the week of Nov. 6. Cutting and installation of the tree at Park Square is scheduled for the week of Nov. 13 or 20.

Details regarding the date and program for the lighting of the tree will be made available at a later date.

10/9/80

City may take possession of some county remnants

continued from page 1

Although most of the equipment was purchased in the 1980s, it is still serviceable, according to county commissioner Tom Stokes. And while the equipment has certainly depreciated in value, replacing it would cost more than \$1.3 million, based on estimates compiled several years ago.

It is likely that replacement cost would be considerably higher today. The "clean lakes" equipment includes:

- Three "weed harvesters" of various sizes, used to pull weeds from lake bottoms, along with trailers
- A shore conveyor belt
- A "mechanical rake"
- A transport barge — the barge needs work before it is operational.
- Two 1987 Ford dump trucks and a pickup truck

The package also includes various spare parts and tools that support the weed harvesting program, including five hydraulic jacks, two chainsaws and a generator.

State won't support

According to Stokes, the study group originally considered transferring the equipment to the state's department of environmental management, until it was made clear that the state did not have money in its budget or the desire to manage the harvesting program.

Another option, Stokes added, was to transfer the items to a contemplated entity, which some advocates hope will be formed to take over some county government functions. Thus far, however, no plan has taken shape.

The group also considered giving Pittsfield and Lanesboro joint ownership of the equipment, but Lanesboro officials indicated they did not support this plan.

A Pittsfield transfer emerged as the best option. "Mayor [Gerald] Doyle expressed strong interest in taking over the equipment, Stokes said.

The study group's recommendation includes a stipulation that Pittsfield make some type of "intergovernmental agreement" with other municipalities to ensure that the equipment will be made available to other communities.

Stokes noted that officials from Lee, Lenox and Stockbridge all expressed concern that their communities would be left out. State representative Christopher Hodgkins at one point wrote a letter objecting to the Pittsfield transfer, Stokes added, but did not attend the study group meeting on Wednesday.

Community services director Robert Mellace, who oversees the city's parks department, attended Wednesday's study group meeting, noting that the equipment will likely be managed by the parks department.

Mellace said that no plan has been put in place as of yet to determine how the weed harvesting program will proceed.

The county commission will officially vote on the matter during a meeting next week.

Once the transfer offer is officially made, the city council will likely consider the matter.

Alternative herbicides possible for Onota Lake

By Erik Arvidson
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The lake management contractor hired to control aquatic weeds at Onota Lake has proposed using one of two alternative herbicides to treat areas of the lake where weeds persisted despite the use of the herbicide Sonar last summer.

According to Ward 7 City Councilor Joseph O. Guzzo, contractor Aquatic Control Technologies wants to amend its permit with the Conservation Commission to allow the use of chemicals for "spot treatments," particularly in areas in the lake's south basin.

"This is a follow-up treatment to last year's whole-lake treatment," Guzzo said. "Some areas of the lake were tougher than others. The Sonar treatment of last year was more designed for the whole lake. These other chemicals are for spot treatments."

A representative of Aquatic Control Technologies said last fall

that the Sonar was 80 percent effective in eradicating the Eurasian milfoil in the 617-acre lake, and that the lake's surface was free of weeds for boating and swimming.

The two chemicals, Reward and Navigate, are both approved chemicals by the state Department of Environmental Protection and are widely used for weed treatment, according to Guzzo.

According to Robert S. Mellace, the city's director of community services, Sonar is a systemic chemical that is used in low doses and works by forcing aquatic plants to expel their chlorophyll. It is also the only herbicide approved by the federal Environmental Protection Agency for drinking water.

"Sonar mixes so easily that the concentration decreases, where Navigate tends to be more effective for spot treatment," Mellace said.

LAKE, continued on B4

Lake from B1

Depending on whether the weeds come back in the spring, the chemicals might not be needed, Mellace said.

Guzzo said his only concern with the use of either of the alternative chemicals was that residents along the lake be careful not to use the lake water on the day the spot treatments are going on.

"It's not anything that's going to have a negative impact on the lake. The dosages are very small and are restricted to a few areas of the lake," Guzzo said.

The Conservation Commission will act on the Onota Lake request at a special meeting tomorrow night at 6 in the City Council chambers at City Hall.

According to Guzzo, there is also an ongoing effort to develop a long-term lake management plan to control the proliferation of weeds. He said the contractor will recommend a treatment regimen based on the success of the alternative chemicals.

The city earlier this year was awarded a grant of \$160,000 from a state water quality program to build the Thomas Island culvert, Guzzo said.

The culvert, which would be installed near Thomas Island Road, would redirect nutrient-rich water that flows from the lake's northern tributaries and contributes to

the growth of weeds.

Lawn fertilizer and other nutrients enter the water from runoff, and the culvert will direct that water toward the lake's dam so that it won't impact the entire lake, Guzzo said.

According to Guzzo, the \$160,000 grant requires that the city provide a match of \$64,000, much of which can be done by in-kind efforts at enhancing water quality such as managing water runoff at Burbank Park, which is next to Onota Lake.

The city may have to provide a cash match of between \$25,000 to \$30,000 to make up for the difference after in-kind efforts are counted, Guzzo said.

4/5/00

Park Commissioners renew commitment to Wahconah

By D.R. Bahlman
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The Park Commission last night endorsed a city councilor's petition calling for a renewed commitment to the preservation of Wahconah Park.

"I'm just asking you to work to keep the lights on," said City Councilor Joseph O. Guzzo of Ward 7.

Guzzo, who said that his petition would be relevant regardless of whether a proposed multiuse facility is constructed in downtown Pittsfield, contended that "many people are convinced that Wahconah Park will fade away."

He added that the park should remain a venue for high school sporting events, and that it would be suitable for other attractions, such as an outdoor theater.

The commission's commitment to Wahconah Park has not — and will not — waver, Park Commission member Clifford J. Nilan said. He noted, however, that the park is suited primarily to baseball.

Park Commission Chairman Robert J. Smith told Guzzo that the panel would be receptive to any suggestions for additional uses of Wahconah Park. Guzzo replied that suggestions will be forthcoming.

Former City Councilor Peter G. Arlos, who attended the meeting, agreed that Wahconah Park should be preserved.

7/18/00

He also contended that the skateboard park in the Common on First Street has become a magnet for graffiti and "an obstacle course for bicycles."

Skateboarders, said Arlos, prefer more visible venues in which to practice their sport, and have gravitated to locations such as parking garages.

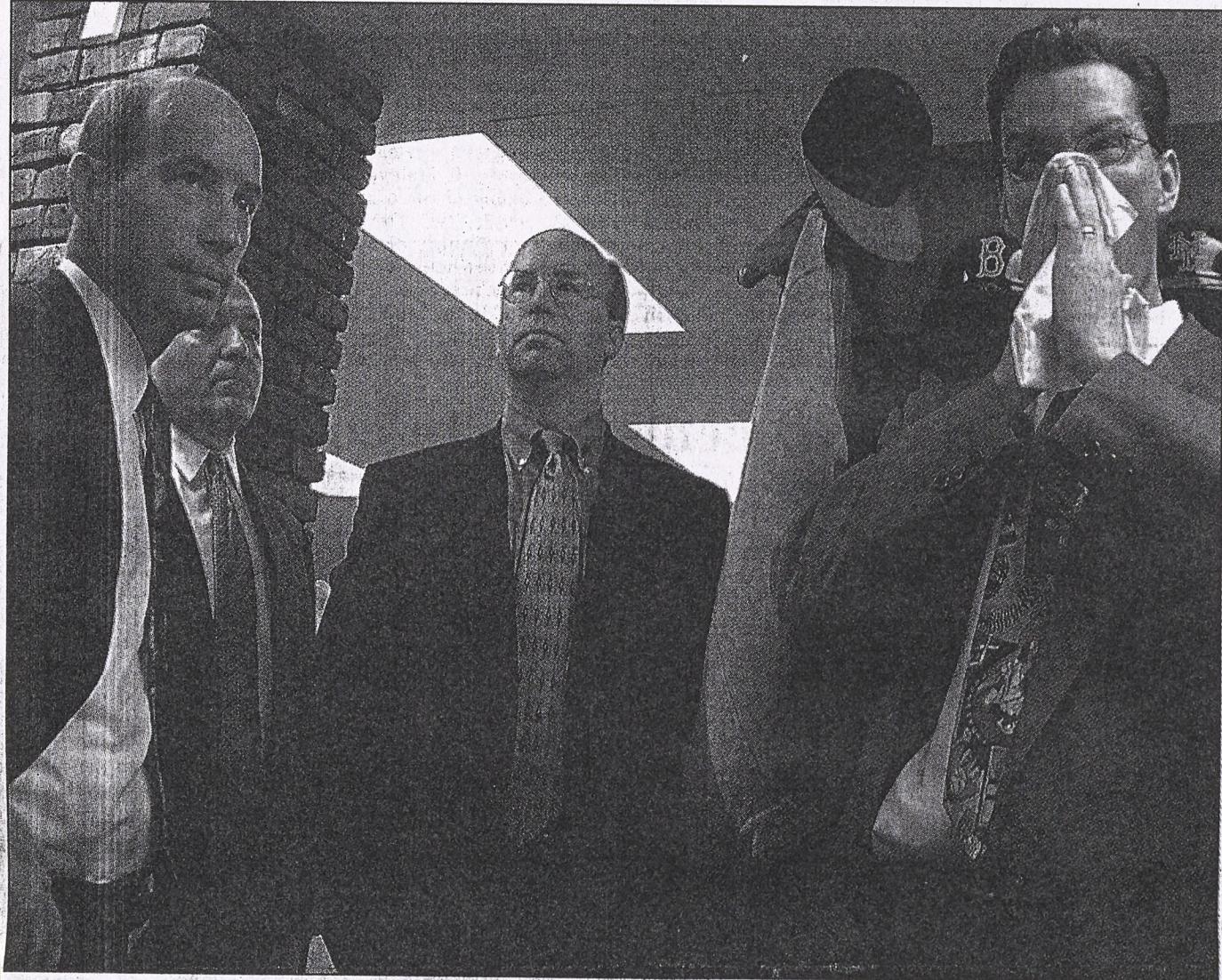
"The idea was to keep them off the streets — it hasn't worked," he said.

In other business last night, the commission agreed to open discussions with representatives of the Berkshire Sculling Association, a not-for-profit group that seeks to convert a former beach house on Onota Lake into a boat-house that would be suitable for storage of its "shells" (boats).

The association hopes to offer instruction in sculling to community and corporate groups. The benefits of the sport, particularly to young people, include learning about teamwork and responsibility, said Todd Haynes, a rowing coach.

Also last night, the commission denied David Graton's request for permission to situate his ice cream vending truck in Burbank Park. Commissioners said that they must protect the interests of the operator of the concession stand at the park. The operator, who sells ice cream, last spring won a competitive public bid to run the concession.

City losing minor league team; franchise plans move to Troy



Pittsfield Mets General Manager Rick Murphy, right, wipes away tears after yesterday's press conference announcing that National Pastime would leave Pittsfield. Others, from left, are Michael Daly of Berkshire Bank, businessman Mick Callahan and Community Development Director Thomas Murphy, who is Rick Murphy's cousin.

Gladstone seizes opportunity

By Howard Herman
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — Timing and a \$12 million check from the state of New York are the reasons why Pittsfield's New York-Penn League baseball team will be calling Troy, N.Y., home within the next two years.

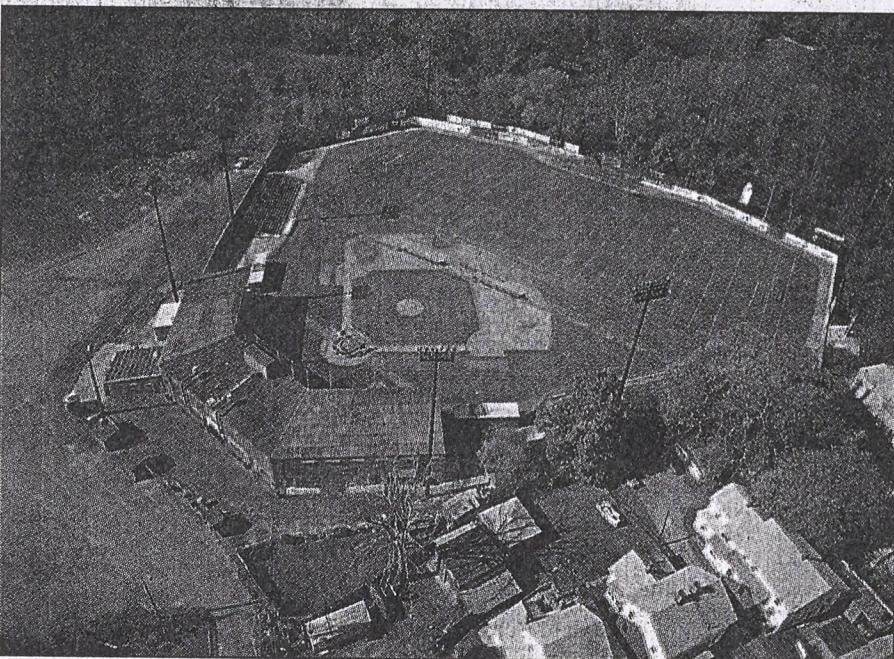
"When somebody says here's \$12 million and we'll build you a stadium, and you compare it to a very strong desire and a movement on the part of business and civic leaders, you have to make a choice," said William L. Gladstone, president of National Pastime Inc., the group that owns the Pittsfield Mets.

"If the timing were different, then the result could well have been different."

It was announced yesterday at a series of news conferences that Gladstone's baseball team will be leaving Wahconah Park for a new \$12 million baseball stadium on the campus of Hudson Valley Community College on the Troy-East Greenbush border.

After the final news conference, Gladstone was asked if his decision to move was based on the deal from New York or on any lack of movement toward a new stadium in Pittsfield. A group of private businessmen is working on securing money for a \$15 million downtown stadium at the site of the former Falcon Chevrolet property at West and Center streets.

"I would say the New York thing came about, period," he said. "I would say that's essentially correct."



A 1997 study determined that it would cost about \$12 million to bring Wahconah Park, built in 1919, up to minor league baseball standards.

The third and final news conference came late yesterday at the Pittsfield Mets offices in the Allendale Underground.

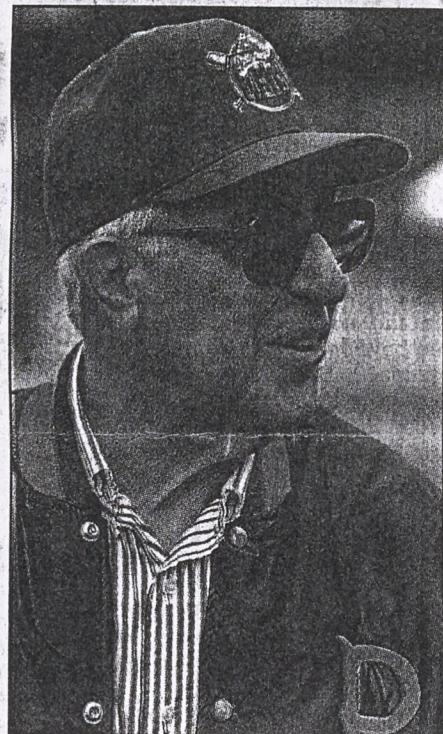
The team will play the 2000 season at Wahconah Park, but is hoping to begin 2001 at its new facility.

"It's an opportunity to be in a facility which will be a superior facility and one which will meet the requirements of our league," said Gladstone, who is also the

treasurer of the New York-Penn League. "We opted for this opportunity."

"This opportunity" came about very quickly. According to Gladstone, New York state Sen. Joseph L. Bruno contacted Gladstone nearly a month ago, inquiring whether, if money were available for a stadium, he would move his team.

TROY, continued on A4



William L. Gladstone
Made business decision

National Pastime's 10-year affiliation with the New York Mets runs out in September. The Pittsfield Mets are a New York-Penn League affiliate of the New York Mets. Starting in 2001, the Mets' affiliate plans to play at a facility on Coney Island.

The Troy stadium will be funded by a \$12 million appropriation in the New York state budget, which was secured by state Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno, R-Brunswick. Last week, Bruno announced that the state would spend more than \$40 million to construct a highway spur between Interstate 90 and the Hudson Valley Community College campus, according to The Associated Press.

Doyle said that the speedy work by the state of New York to lure a professional sports franchise away from Pittsfield with the promise of a publicly funded

TEAM, continued on A4

By Erik Arvidson
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — Making good on a promise to leave Pittsfield if a modern stadium was not built to replace Wahconah Park, the owner of the minor league baseball franchise here plans to move to Troy, N.Y., to field a team at a proposed multimillion-dollar baseball stadium.

William L. Gladstone, president of National Pastime Corp., which owns franchise rights in Pittsfield, said he will move the company as early as next summer to a \$12 million facility planned at the campus of Hudson Valley Community College in Troy.

Mayor Gerald S. Doyle Jr. said at a news conference that efforts to build a \$15 million multipurpose stadium near Pittsfield's downtown will continue, and promised that Pittsfield would have another minor league ball team playing here, possibly within three years.

"The announcement is not a surprise. National Pastime has had discussions with other locations for some time, and had to make a decision in the best interest of their business. The long-term viability of Wahconah Park was a critical element in their decision," Doyle said.

He added, "Without a new facility, we will not be able to attract minor league baseball to Pittsfield."

'The purpose of the park watch is for people around the park to call [police] when things are going on.'

8/4/00

Police working to organize 'park watch' for Common

By Tony Dobrowolski
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — In response to two violent incidents at the Common on First Street in June, police are setting up a "park watch" in which people who live in the area could alert officers to suspicious activity.

Police Chief Anthony J. Riello said the park watch will be similar to a neighborhood crime watch, in which organized groups call police when they notice something suspicious.

"The purpose of the park watch is for people around the park to call us when things are going on," Riello said.

On June 9, four shots from a 9 mm

handgun were fired near the Common's basketball courts from a car with three males in it.

Riello said officers who patrol that area were on Maplewood Avenue on their way to the Common when the shots were fired.

"If someone had called police right

COMMON, continued on B4

Pick up the phone

"Park watch," the Pittsfield Police Department's response to two violent incidents in the Common park on First Street earlier this summer, is grounded in common sense. The department plans to organize residents of the neighborhood around the park to call police when they notice something suspicious. That seems simple enough. Regrettably, though, too many people don't call because they worry that they'll be branded as pests if they "drop a dime" too often. Others assume that someone else has already called. Police Chief Anthony J. Riello has repeatedly made it clear that neither of these concerns is valid, and that citizens should not hesitate to pick up the phone. Citizens should take the chief at his word.

8/7/00

Don't forget public parks

State Representative Peter J. Larkin's tenacious advocacy for a regional tourism facility fund has paid off with the Legislature's approval of a plan that would allocate 50 percent of any increase in the Massachusetts Tourism Fund to a pool of money that would be used to partially finance the construction, expansion and renovation of facilities that attract visitors from outside the state. The multiuse stadium proposed for downtown Pittsfield may be a worthy beneficiary of such funding, but the city's existing public parks should not be forgotten. Currently, less than \$60,000 per year is earmarked for the maintenance of some 30 parks. One of them, Burbank Park on Onota Lake, has recently undergone a major facelift and is enjoyed by increasing numbers of residents and visitors. In many respects, we're all tourists. Money invested in public parks would be well spent.

8/13/00

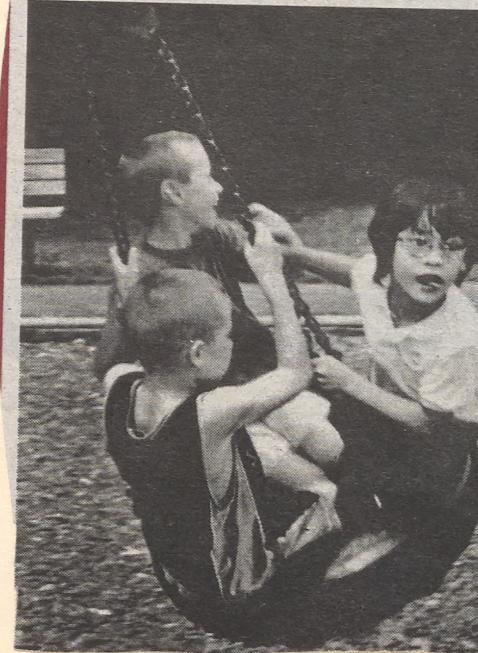
Crimes fuel Common concerns

By Anthony Fyden

Summer arrived this week, but a chilling shadow lingers over the Pittsfield Common.

Two recent violent incidents — including a possibly drug related shooting this past week and a stabbing on Sunday evening — have cast a pall on the downtown park, prompting some parents and social service agencies to steer clear of the site.

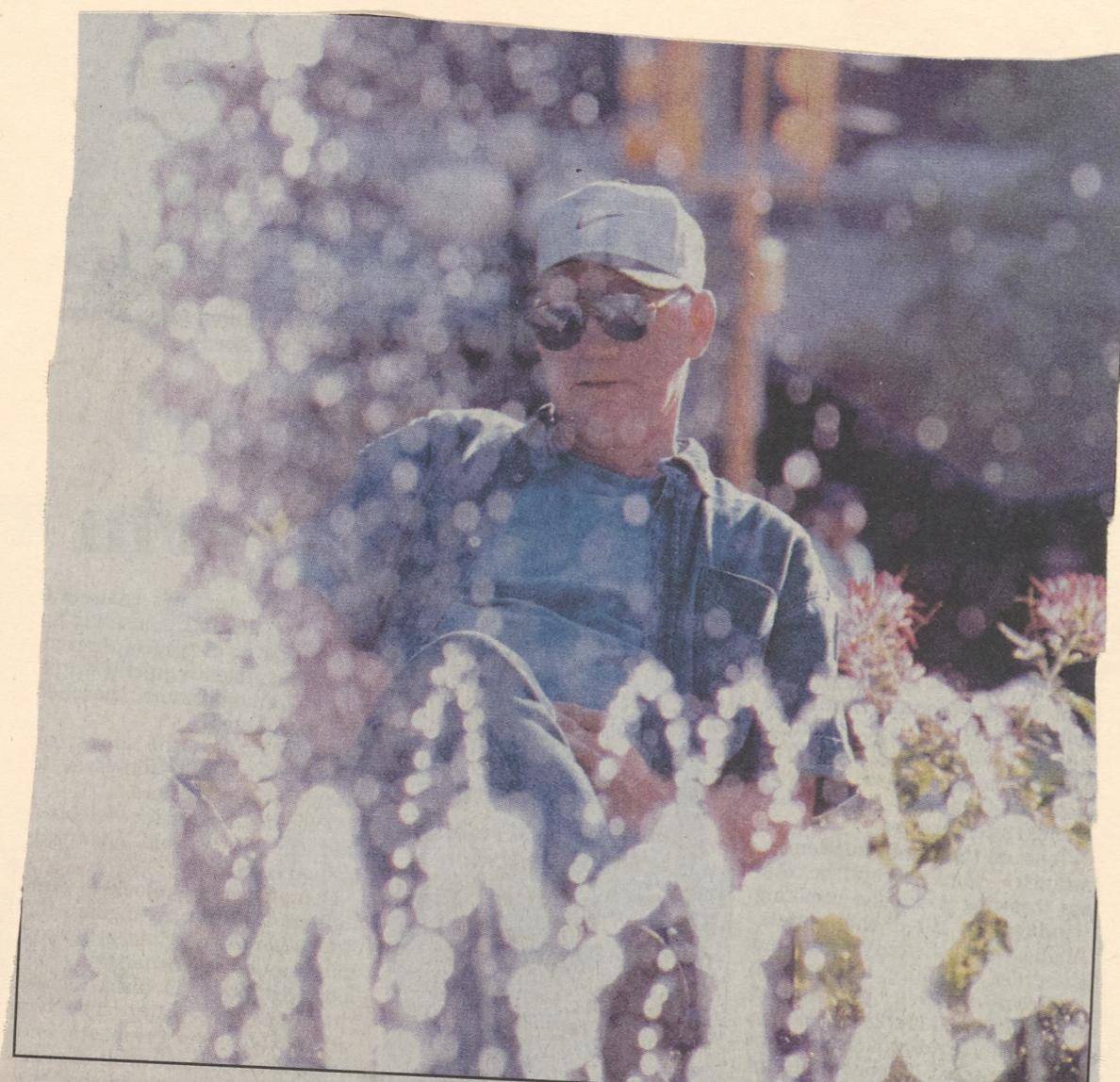
"We haven't gone back," said Liz Baker, director of the school-age childcare program for Girls Incorporated. "Our parents are very concerned. This is Pittsfield; this is a wonderful city. It's really unfortunate that we have to address these issues at all."



Recent trouble at the First Street Common has some parents worried. These Morningside School youngsters played under close supervision of teachers on Wednesday. The police department's community command center also kept a watchful eye on the park.

See COMMON page 24

6/21/00



Park Square repose

Francis Lynch of Bartlett Avenue sits in the late-afternoon sun yesterday, enjoying the fountain

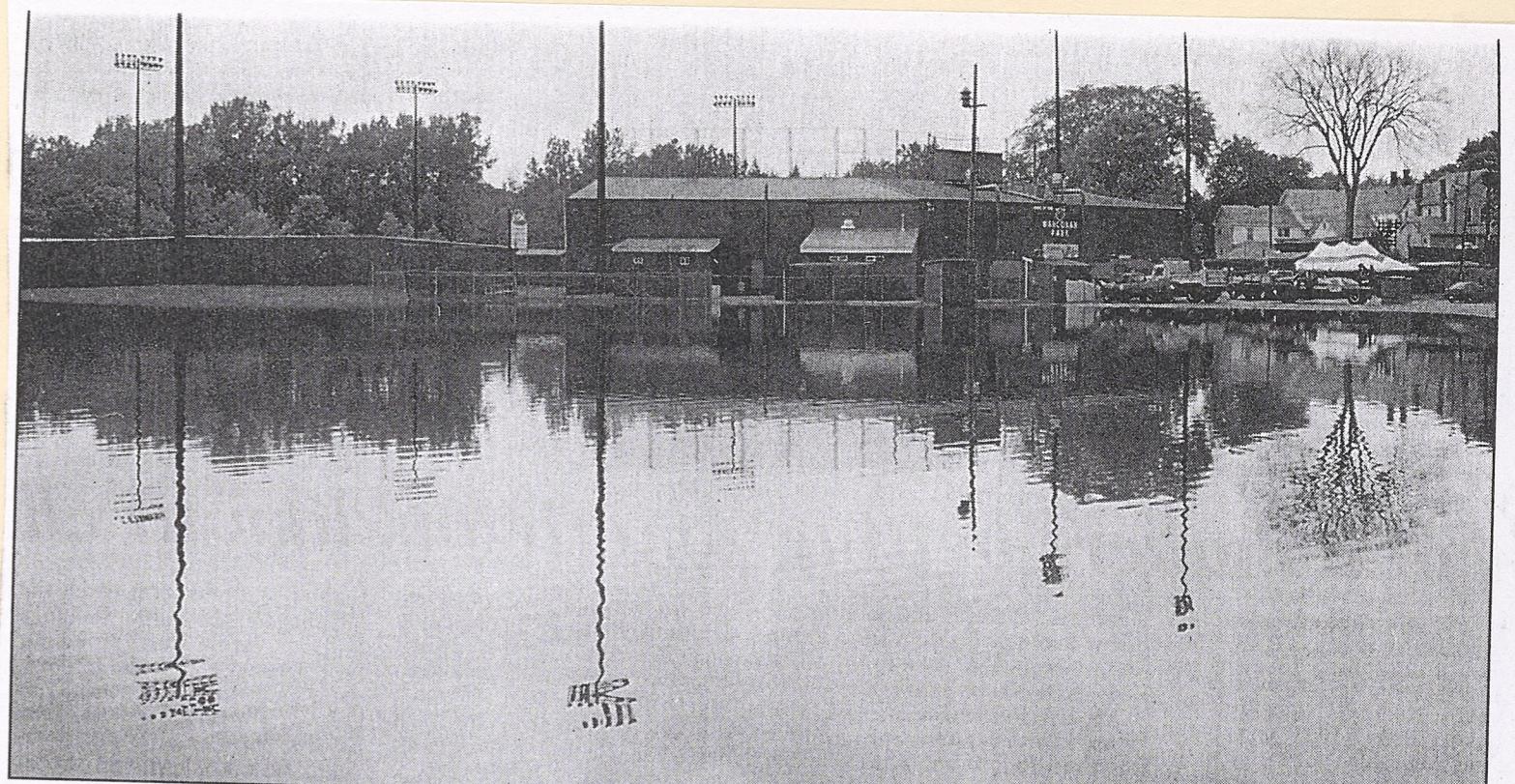
Shannon DeCeli / Berkshire Eagle Staff

7/29/00

25 Years Ago: Aug. 7, 1975

The Park Square area in Pittsfield was entered in the National Register of Historic Places. The area was included on the register because it was the center of Pittsfield's early development and site of the nation's first agriculture fair.

7/7/00



The parking lot at Wahconah Park was flooded before the Pittsfield Mets' opening day in June 1999, a common occurrence. Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Team from A1

baseball stadium should serve as a wake-up call to elected officials in Massachusetts.

"If anything, it gives us more inspiration to move forward and move quickly. They did it in two months in New York, with the help of the state. I think this announcement might help rattle a few of the bureaucratic cages in Boston," Doyle said.

The mayor added, "If the governor came here and said, 'I'm going to give you \$15 million, you build this stadium, go find a team,' we could make a great arrangement. We don't have that luxury in Massachusetts as they do in New York."

Doyle said plans are still going "full-steam ahead" for a 5,000-seat stadium at the corner of West and Center streets. He said that \$7 million of the \$15 million in private investment needed to fund the construction has already been raised.

In addition, Doyle said, a geological survey of the site, which includes the former Falcon auto dealership, has found "no obstacles that would prevent the construction of a multiuse stadium."

Doyle also said that city and private officials have talked with "several teams in several different leagues" about playing baseball here. He said there could be an announcement in the next several months of a new minor league team, but declined to specify which teams have been contacted.

The mayor said negotiations with new minor league teams will go "hand-in-hand" with site preparation and other preliminary work for the new stadium. Within several months, Doyle said, enough of the preliminary work will be done to assure a team that a multipurpose stadium will be built here.

Besides the \$25 million in public and private investment in the downtown now happening, a stadium could serve as an "economic engine," Doyle said. He added that with the Pittsfield Mets, which some years drew 80,000 fans, the city and entire county have shown "strong support" for professional baseball, which will help attract a new ownership group.

Gladstone had ruled out signing a long-term deal to field a



Mayor Gerald S. Doyle Jr. addresses community leaders and members of the media during a press conference at City Hall yesterday. Doyle said city and private officials have talked with "several teams in several different leagues" about playing in Pittsfield after the National Pastime franchise leaves.

Ben Garver / Berkshire Eagle Staff

team at Wahconah Park beyond the 2000 season. He had said repeatedly that the viability of minor league baseball here hinged on a new stadium suitable for professional baseball being built.

Gladstone's franchise will be provided a team by the league. There are 13 other teams other than the Mets with affiliates in the New York-Penn League.

Built in 1919, Wahconah Park has numerous structural and space deficiencies, and a 1997 study determined that it would cost \$12 million to make the park conform to minor league baseball standards.

The debate over whether the antiquated park should be renovated surfaced recently when Berkshire County Treasurer Peter G. Arlos suggested that the Pittsfield City Council request

\$25,000 from the county to fund a study of the park, in case a new stadium wasn't built.

Doyle was asked whether those discussions may have influenced Gladstone's decision to move out of Pittsfield.

"Knowing Bill the way I do, the person who brought the petition, in Bill Gladstone's mind, doesn't have any credibility to begin with," Doyle replied.

The mayor has vowed to vote against the \$25,000 study if the proposal goes to the county's advisory board, on which he is Pittsfield's representative.

Doyle said he learned of National Pastime's decision at 9:30 p.m. Sunday, when Gladstone called him.

"He's a businessman who made a business decision with the franchise," the mayor said.

Troy from A1

"When they said the money was available, that was when we said we could be available to go. The money wasn't available until early Saturday morning when the state passed the budget," Gladstone explained.

Gladstone did say he had spoken with New York state officials before when the possibility of the Pittsfield Mets moving to Brooklyn had come up two seasons ago. The team owner added that he also had some discussions about a Troy move last year, but did not follow up on them.

Pittsfield Mayor Gerald M. Doyle Jr., who attended Gladstone's late-afternoon news conference, said what he heard just makes his stated goal of a multi-purpose stadium in downtown Pittsfield necessary.

Said Doyle, "I think it's quite apparent why this team is leaving. It's leaving for a brand-new facility. Sooner or later we're going to have to realize we have a piece of history on Wahconah Street. But we also need to modernize to keep these types of amenities, and professional baseball is a huge amenity for the city of Pittsfield."

Gladstone admitted that while from a business standpoint, the decision on moving wasn't a hard one, the move itself will be a wrenching one.

"This is the 12th year of the franchise and the ninth year with my group's ownership. While we're moving, it may seem strange to say, but we love it here," said Gladstone, who owns a home in Pittsfield. "We've had a good run in Pittsfield."

The proposed move will also be difficult for club vice president and general manager Rick Murphy, who is a Taconic High School graduate and who has been with the franchise since he, Mike Casey and the late Francis Devanny brought the team here from Little Falls, N.Y., in 1989.

"Unfortunately, we're in a business that's predicated on playing facilities. We are in a business where player development is paramount," Murphy said. "It's our responsibility, contractually, to provide the best facility."

When pressed on whether the move was going to be difficult, Murphy thought about it and took a deep breath.

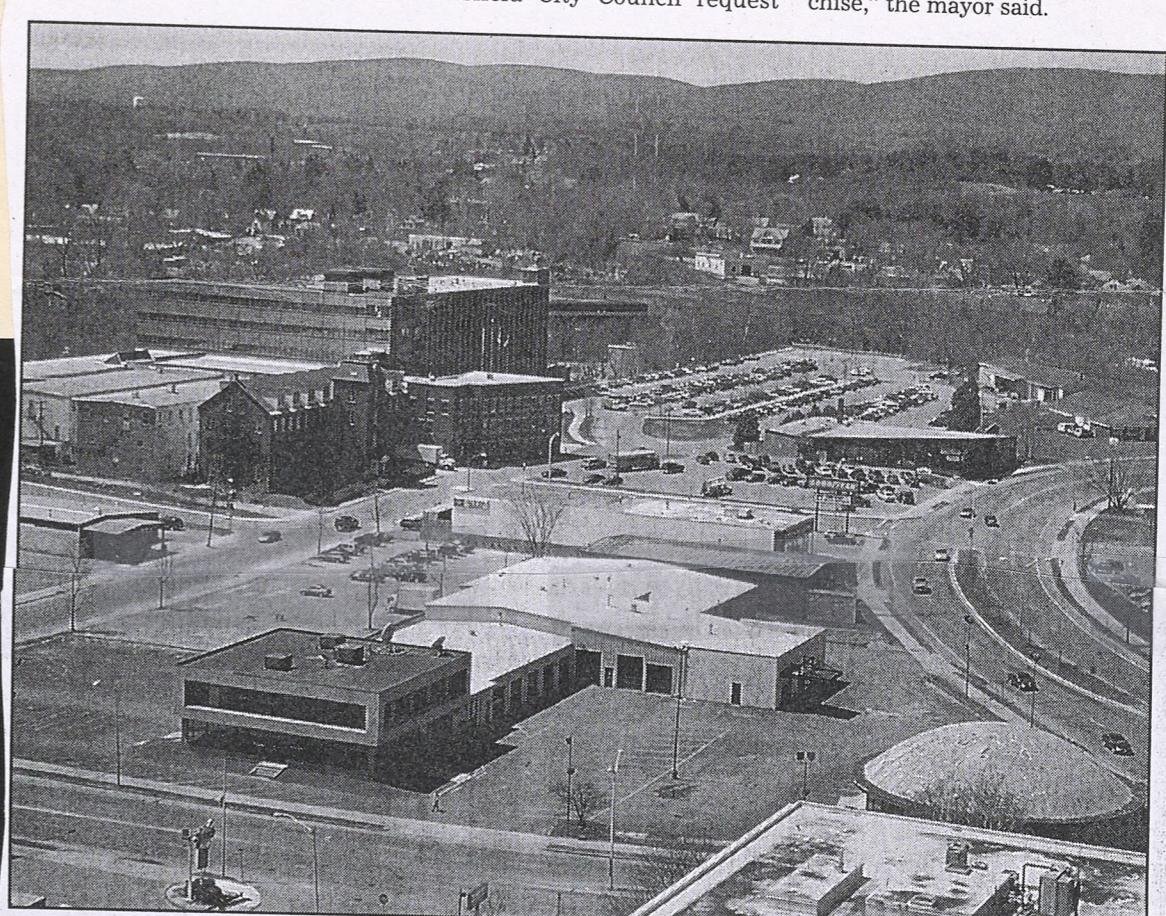
"Well, yeah, it is," he said. While Gladstone said he's looking forward to opening 2001 in New York state, he left open the possibility that the current Pittsfield franchise will play one more campaign at Wahconah Park.

"There is a possibility, and it depends on how optimistic or realistic somebody is, that this new stadium could be built by June of next year. If it were to happen, and I would say it's a pretty long shot, we would be there," he said. "Otherwise, we would exercise our option and be happy to be here in Pittsfield for the 2001 season."

At a morning news conference in City Hall, Doyle said Gladstone offered his help in trying to locate another baseball franchise for Pittsfield. The team owner was asked by reporters if he'd be willing to do that.

"To the extent that we'd have any influence and can get somebody to make a change, if Pittsfield has a new stadium, it would give us a lot of pleasure to see another New York-Penn League team here," Gladstone said.

"We'll miss Pittsfield," he continued. "I hope Pittsfield will miss us. I also hope that the new stadium does come to fruition."



Mayor Gerald S. Doyle said yesterday that plans are still going "full-steam ahead" for a 5,000-seat stadium at the corner of West and Center streets, on the site of the former Falcon auto dealership. In background is the Clock Tower Business Park, which houses The Berkshire Eagle. The mayor said that \$7 million of the \$15 million in private investment needed to fund the construction of a multipurpose facility has already been raised.

Ben Garver / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Agreement will protect Park Square

By Erik Arvidson
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — As the city prepares to complete \$258,000 of improvements to Park Square, an agreement between the city and the Massachusetts Historical Commission will preserve the park's historical and architectural character by limiting future alterations to the site.

A preservation restriction agreement, which was approved by the City Council last week and is being recorded in the Central Berkshire Registry of Deeds, prevents the city from making large-scale changes to Park Square without the involvement of the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Looking out for an investment

Adopting the preservation restriction is a condition the city accepted in order to receive a \$140,000 Preservation Projects Fund grant from the historical commission to fund improvements to Park Square, which is listed on the State Register of Historic Places.

"Basically, what the historical commission is saying is, 'Hey, look, we sunk some money into it, now we want to protect our investment,'" said Robert S. Mellace, director of community services. Park Square is maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department.

The agreement has already been approved by the Parks Commission and Mayor Gerald S. Doyle Jr.

Under the agreement, the city continues to assume the cost of maintaining the park and agrees to allow the historical commission to inspect the premises to see if it is being maintained properly.

The city is allowed to make alterations to Park Square that are "clearly of a minor nature and not affecting the characteristics which contribute to the architectural, archaeological or historical integrity of the premises, or

4/16/00

SQUARE, continued on B6

Square from B1 4/16/00

that the commission has previously determined that it will not impair such characteristics," the agreement states.

The descriptions of "minor alterations" include such work as hand scraping and repainting of nondecorative and nonsignificant surfaces, routine maintenance and landscaping such as lawn mowing, pruning and planting.

The agreement defines "major alterations" as altering of the property, moving of significant landscaping features such as gardens, vistas, walks or plantings, and ground disturbance affecting archaeological resources.

"The whole idea behind getting the grant was to restore the archaeological and architectural integrity of the park. All of the improvements we proposed, the historical commission was heavily involved in," Mellace said.

Work to resume this week

Mellace said the contractors hired by the city, Mountainview Landscapes and Lawncare Inc., will be resuming work on Park Square this week.

There is about six weeks of work remaining, and city officials are hoping to have the work done in time for Memorial Day, May 29.

The work remaining includes

installing decorative stones, putting up the new period lighting, installing new benches and trash receptacles, and most of the landscaping including planting of shrubs and sodding.

An unidentified man watches trains heading west from the First Street bridge adjacent to the Common.

Ben Garver / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Common from B1

"Call us," Riello replied.

The chief said that although patrols in the park have increased substantially — as they usually do with the advent of warm weather — police cannot maintain a permanent presence there or anywhere else in the city. Nevertheless, he said, the more contact between patrol officers and citizens, the better.

In other areas of Pittsfield,

Riello said, members of neighborhood watch organizations are personally acquainted with beat officers and regularly share information with them.

"That's what I'd like to focus on getting started here," he said.

Downing also noted the value of such relationships, observing that prosecutors who can tell judges that a particular defendant has been the subject of previous complaints can make stronger arguments in preliminary court proceedings such as bail hearings.

Responding to a question, Riello said that gang activity has been largely suppressed in Pittsfield, thanks in large part to preventive programs in the public schools and a closely knit network of law enforcement agencies that regularly "share intelligence."

"Is gang activity a real serious threat to safety here?" said the chief. "No."

Officer Daniel E. Triceri, who regularly patrols the Common, said that he does not view the skate park as a catalyst for trouble

there.

City Councilor James Brassard of Ward 2 noted that his petition calling for increased lighting and police presence in the park was to be considered by the City Council last night. The council referred the petition to its Public Safety Committee. However, Brassard's recitation of the petition's proposals — particularly the one calling for additional lighting — was greeted by applause at the Freedman Center meeting.

Pitt Park advocates eye skating rink

Advocates for Pitt Park thanked park commissioners for past support on Monday and requested additional help for the west Pittsfield tract.

Joe Bennett said that a revitalization of the park is having a domino effect.

"The park is beginning to look good," he said. "We're trying to build some community pride and we see the park as symbolic."

Youth sports leagues have been formed to use the park and improved lighting — as well as strong neighborhood presence — are cutting back

on criminal activity, Bennett said.

Bennett called for additional lighting — he said drug dealers haven't been fully banished — as well as

equipment that volunteers can use for maintenance.

"We're also thinking about addi-

tion activities and would like to try

a small ice skating rink," he said.

Parks commission chairman Rob

ert J. Smith said that's a great idea,

provided volunteers can flood the

site.

"If you have the manpower and

time," said Smith, "I think we can

plow it and bank it."

Bennett said that the initiatives at the park are succeeding because they involve residents, rather than the city.

"I like the idea of community building," he said. "The idea is to get hands-on involvement instead of handouts."

Community services director Bob Mellace said Bennett and other volunteers have completed many tasks that the shorthanded parks department can't manage. "We realize that's a heavily used community-oriented park," said Mellace.

10/5/00

City expects to plant 51 trees in 2001

A revised tree-planting program is taking root at city hall.

Community development specialist Bob Cornwell told parks commissioners on Monday that residents have requested more than 70 tree plantings through the newly christened "Replanting of Our Tradition" initiative.

Through October 15, the city is accepting suggestions of parks, streets and public properties where trees should be planted.

The unique twist, said Cornwell, is a tie to Pittsfield's 110th anniversary as a city next year.

In addition to recommending tree planting sites, residents are being invited to dedicate a tree in memory of a loved one.

"This is an amplified version of an existing tree program," said Cornwell.

All told, Cornwell expects 51 trees to be planted using allocated community development funds. The

number of trees may increase if residents who recommend dedications donate funds, as they are being invited to do.

Cornwell expects ten trees to be planted in city parks through the program.

"We're planning on a planting time in the spring of next year," he said.

Residents interested in requesting a tree or dedication should contact the community development office at city hall.

10-5-00





Police Chief Anthony Riello addresses city officials and neighbors of the Common park at the Elizabeth Freeman Center last night. *Shannon DeCelle / Berkshire Eagle Staff*

Common advice: 'Call us'

Chief urges neighbors to contact police at signs of trouble

By D.R. Bahman
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — Trouble in the Common park on First Street is most likely to be averted through the cooperative efforts of police, citizens and community service agencies, a gathering of neighbors of the park agreed last night.

"You really have to pick up the phone — call us," Police Chief Anthony J. Riello told the meeting at the Elizabeth Freeman Center, which is situated just north of the Common. "... I'd love to find a couple of real nosy people around that park."

Safety at the Common has been highlighted since a shooting and a stabbing occurred there this month.

On June 9, four shots from a 9 mm handgun were fired near the Common's basketball court by three men riding in a car. Police, saying that their investigation has been hampered because no witnesses have come forward, have yet to make an arrest in that case.

Nine days later, 19-year-old Pittsfield man was slashed in the back of the neck and left side of the face after arguing with a woman in the Common. Michael Stabin's wounds required 30 stitches to close.

On June 21, police arrested Nelson D. Martinez, 18, in Dalton and charged him with slashing Stabin. Martinez is being held in lieu of \$35,000 cash bond.

Last night's meeting, which was attended by officials including city councilors, police officers, members of the city's Park Commission, District Attorney Gerard D. Downing and probation officers, was held at the Freeman Center's Pittsfield office at the invitation of Marsha Savage, the organization's executive director.

Savage observed that although the center's primary mission is counseling victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, the prevention of violence is an overarching concern. She offered the center's facilities for future meetings of neighborhood groups and said that the center could serve as a "catalyst" for discussion of problems in the park.

"At least once a week, I hear a gunshot," Hayward said. He added that he doesn't want to be the "boy who cried wolf" by contacting the police too frequently.

"If you call the police at every noise, you'd have somebody there all night," he said.

COMMON, continued on B4

Pittsfield, Massachusetts, Tuesday, August 22, 2000

Circling Park Square

Doyle exploring changes in confusing traffic pattern

By Erik Arvidson
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — For many motorists, it is simply a dizzying headache in the shape of an oval.

The confusing slalom of drivers battling for position that plays out daily around Pittsfield's historic Park Square has been the routine for residents and passers-through for decades.

Traffic lanes seem to virtually disappear or crisscross, while motorists yielding to oncoming traffic create a queue that backs up into other lanes, and the right of way seems to go to the driver who is the best at zig-zagging.

But Mayor Gerald S. Doyle Jr. and other city officials believe changes are in store for the rotary in the heart of Pittsfield where several major arteries — Routes 7 and 20 and East and West streets

— intersect.

With \$300,000 in Park Square aesthetic improvements now completed, Doyle said he wants to develop a plan that will allow north and south traffic to flow straight ahead, without being forced to circle the rotary.

That significant change, along with possibly eliminating the ability of drivers to enter Allen Street from the rotary, would create a safer and smoother transition, the mayor said.

"I think we should do something about it. If it's too expensive, we're not going to do it," Doyle said. "I can say that we will not disturb Park Square itself. It's just been totally renovated and it looks beautiful. We're not going to touch it."

Currently, drivers on North Street traveling south can continue straight through without having to round the rotary. But

South Street traffic heading north is dumped onto Bank Row on the south side of the rotary, and must merge with other traffic, changing lanes against the stream of traffic twice before getting to the North Street side of the rotary.

Doyle said the traffic signal islands on the west side of the rotary would have to be removed and the signalization changed to allow the north-south flow of traffic.

If the city did that, it would have to have the approval of the Massachusetts Highway Department so that it doesn't lose any of its Chapter 90 highway allocation from the state, Doyle said.

One particular problem is that the heavier, commercial vehicles and trucks passing through the city must use the

TRAFFIC, continued on A4



Drivers heading to North Street from South Street now have to circle Park Square instead of heading straight ahead. Cars here are traveling east. *Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff*

Board reiterates support for Wahconah

With a new multi-use stadium in the works, ward 7 city councilor Joe Guzzo is wondering what uses would be left for Wahconah Park.

Guzzo asked the parks commission on Monday to take a "proactive" role in developing a future mission for Wahconah Park, presuming that professional baseball flies the coop at this season's end.

Guzzo said that proponents' plans for the new stadium, which is slated for the corner of West & Center streets, include not only baseball but also football, soccer, concerts and other events.

With pressure on stadium proponents to use the new facility as much as possible, little would be left for Wahconah, Guzzo said. "I'm just asking you to keep the lights on, that's all," he said.

Guzzo asked the commission to "take a positive stand and vote in support of Wahconah Park." The board should develop a clear plan of future uses for Wahconah that would be separate from the proposed new stadium.

While Guzzo stressed that he is not criticizing the board, some members appeared taken aback by the city councilor's call for support of the venerable Wahconah.

"How have we not done that?" asked Clifford Nilan.

Nilan said that he is a supporter of developing a new stadium and believes that Wahconah will continue to host amateur sports. The park, he said, would be used "the same as we've used it for the last 40 years." "Wahconah Park will still be used

very heavily for high school sports and the kind of activity it has been in the past," he said. "I don't think there's any problem here."

Guzzo replied that "I don't think these activities in and of itself will be enough."

The councilor fears that if the park is not used, it will fall into further disrepair, making future maintenance and refurbishment difficult to justify. "I think that people are becoming increasingly convinced that Wahconah Park is just going to fade away," Guzzo said. "I'm asking that you take a fresh effort and affect a new approach."

Former city councilor Peter Arlos voiced support for Guzzo's appeal.

"Joe has every right to be concerned

... that Wahconah Park will be left out," Arlos said. "It is very important to this city that we rescue Wahconah Park."

Arlos noted that the parks commission has been forced to maintain city parks, including Wahconah, on an extremely tight budget in recent years. The baseball stadium, in fact, has never had a separate line item for maintenance.

Commission chairman Robert Smith said that the board would "welcome ideas" regarding future uses for Wahconah Park. Smith also noted that, in the past, the potential for amateur sports and events at the facility has been limited.

"Part of the reason we didn't do more there is the [Pittsfield] Mets were always worried about ruining the field," he said.

Guzzo said that he wants to work with the commission to develop a plan: "In the very near future I will have some suggestions and some ideas."

Traffic from A1

8/22/00
major thoroughfares because heavy trucks were banned years ago from using Holmes Road or Williams Street.

A frequent scenario around Park Square is smaller vehicles becoming trapped by a trailer-truck that is making a tight corner and whose back end juts into the adjacent lane.

"We need to adjust for the trucks coming off East Street who used to use Holmes Road and Williams Street and can't use [them] anymore," Doyle said.

William L. Forestell, commissioner of public works and utilities, said another improvement would be to make Allen Street one-way so that rotary traffic can't enter. "If you want to eliminate that confusion, then frankly you're better off closing that off," he said.

Currently, motorists who want to enter Allen Street from the east side of the rotary have to stop and yield to the East Street traffic, which blocks the smooth flow of traffic around Park Square.

"Shutting off the east side of Park Square would all be subject to public hearings," Forestell added. "I'm sure there would be concern from businesses on that first block of East Street that they would lose customers. There would be some opposition to any closing off of Allen Street."

Forestell said he expects to issue a request for proposals from engineering consultants in the next several weeks to devise a plan for Park Square.

Former City Engineer Jeffrey Collingwood had been in the early stages of doing an engineering study for Park Square when he left the position. His replacement, Christopher Pompi, recently left for a position at Berkshire Community College, Forestell said.

The solution is not as simple as "bulldozing your way through the islands," Forestell said, because the traffic signal boxes would have to be relocated. There also would have to be a safe pedestrian crossing system if those islands were removed.

"One thing to consider is, would it be better to give the traffic in the circle the right of way, rather than giving the traffic westbound on East Street the right of way?" Forestell said. "You have no room or time to maneuver, and it can be a very confusing pattern."

The City Council has voted more than once — a vote in 1997 and again at its Aug. 8 meeting — to change the circular pattern at Park Square. Former City Councilor Peter G. Arlos contend at the time that the council never permanently approved the traffic pattern, although it had passed temporary orders, including one in 1950.

Arlos, who is county treasurer, also has called for a return of diagonal parking on the north side of Park Square, which was in effect in the 1950s.

But Doyle said the diagonal parking would only create additional safety problems, considering there is probably more traffic volume around Park Square than there was in the 1950s.

DeSisto from B1

Basit testified.

He immediately admitted Rubin to the hospital to undergo dialysis to reduce the amount of lithium in her system, he said.

"It was precipitated by a lack of fluid," Basit said of Rubin's condition. A lithium patient should drink as much as his or her thirst requires, he said, adding, "That is the most precise way to maintain water balance."

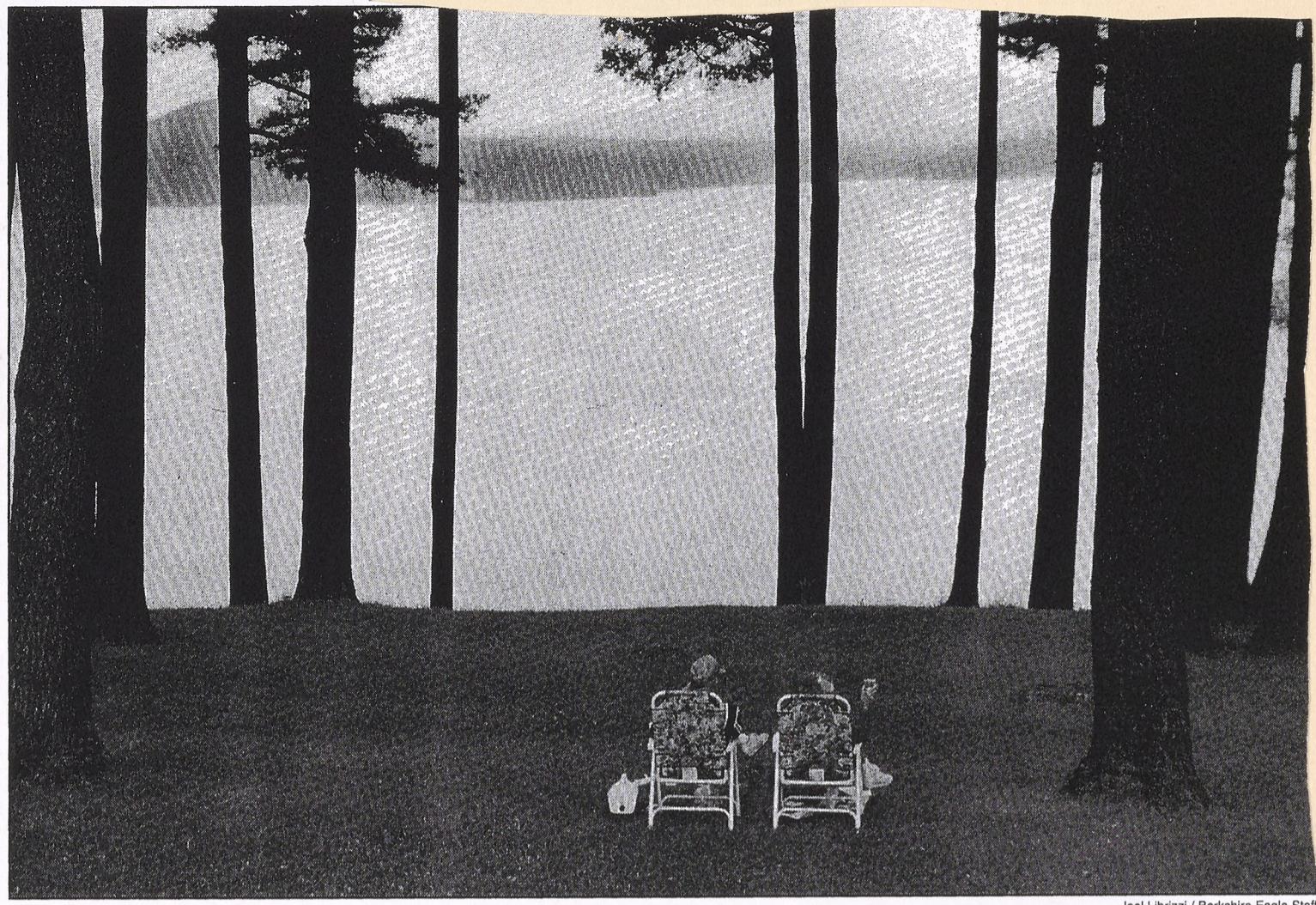
Rubin was taking 2,100 milligrams of lithium per day, which Basit categorized as a "high dosage."

Since she drank a gallon or more of water per day, she had to urinate frequently, prompting complaints from other students in her dormitory because she had to wake them to use the bathroom in the middle of the night.

In September, her fluid intake was limited to 13 8-ounce glasses of water per day, in part, to limit her nighttime trips to the bathroom.

With diabetes insipidus, patients often have to urinate frequently, but they secrete mostly water rather than solids they should be flushing out of their system, Basit said under cross-examination by Pritchett's attorney, Michael O. Jennings of Springfield.

Jennings, as well as McIntyre's attorney, Vincent A. Bongiorni of Springfield, tried to get Basit to admit that the lithium toxicity found in Rubin could have been caused by a pre-existing condition.



Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

In the frame

Surrounded by towering white pines, Garry and Joan Van Ort enjoy the view of Pontoosuc Lake and the mountains beyond.



Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Walking weather

Arnie and Barbara Caplin of Pittsfield take advantage of the recent warm weather by taking a walk in Burbank Park near Onota Lake.

10/25/00



Children take to the water at Pittsfield's Springside Park pond in 1940.

Eagle archives
7/25/00

Miss Bridget M. Deely of Center Street, Lee, celebrated her 109th birthday this week. The retired dressmaker was born in Lee in 1866.

10 Years Ago: July 12, 1990

With its lowest budget ever —

\$364,400 — the Pittsfield Department of Parks and Recreation would only provide lifeguards for one of its two beaches, Burbank Park at Onota Lake. The public beach at Pontoosuc Lake, while open, would have no lifeguard on duty.

Compiled by Eagle librarian Grace McMahon.

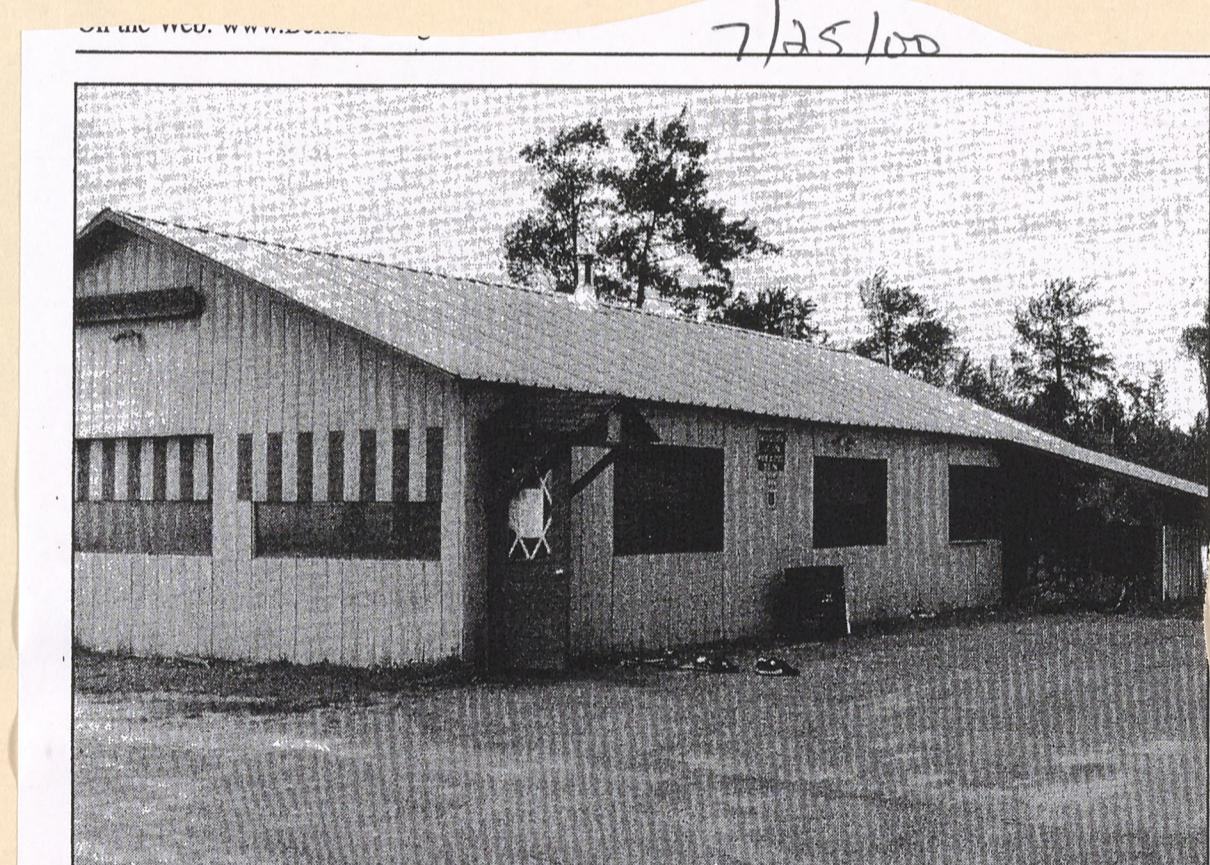


Photo by D.R. Bahlman

Renovation work is expected to start on the Controy pavilion in Burbank Park in September. Among the improvements will be a refurbished kitchen and new play structures for children.

Park pavilion to get extensive face lift

By D.R. Bahlman
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The Controy pavilion in Burbank Park is slated for an extensive face lift, courtesy of a group of volunteers.

Representatives of the General Electric Elfun Society presented preliminary plans for the work to the Park Commission last week. The society, which has undertaken numerous projects in the city over the years, has a budget of \$65,000 for improvements at the pavilion, Dennis Arseneau told the commission.

Some 150 to 200 volunteers, led by Rich Kramer and his wife, Stacy Schaeffer, will renovate the pavilion on Sept. 16.

Plans call for rebuilding the structure from the inside out, said

Arseneau. The kitchen will be refurbished, and a large overhead door will be installed to facilitate the moving of tables and benches for events held inside the pavilion.

Two new "play structures," one for children aged 2 to 5 and another for 5- to 12-year-olds, will be installed near the pavilion. Plans also call for repair of the old pumping station at Onota Lake, Arseneau said.

The project is the latest to benefit Burbank Park. Last year, some \$900,000 was spent on improvements there, including repaving of both parking lots.

In addition, the section of Lakeway Drive that leads into the park was repaved, the boat launch "pad" was extended farther into

Onota Lake, the railing on the fishing pier was replaced and repaired, the beach in front of the bathhouse was reconstructed, and a handicapped-accessible walkway was built along the lake shore from the bathhouse to the south parking lot.

Funding for the work came from a combination of grants, money from the city and reimbursement programs.

The pavilion, which is situated near the lake shore north of the bathhouse, is named for Franklin H. Controy, a longtime chairman of Pittsfield's Conservation Commission and a staunch defender of the city's parks, rivers, lakes and wetlands.

Controy, who died in 1987 at age 75, helped build the pavilion.

Pittsfield prepares takeover of weed-harvesting chores

By Erik Arvidson
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The city is preparing to take over Berkshire County's weed-harvesting and Clean Rivers programs after county government is dissolved on July 1, and will offer those services to communities on a fee-for-service basis.

Mayor Gerald S. Doyle Jr. hopes the program will be self-sufficient since the county is donating \$1 million of weed-harvesting equipment to the city after it becomes extinct.

Starting in July, Pittsfield will begin weed-harvesting in the portion of Pontoosuc Lake inside the city limits; other communities who benefited from the county's weed-harvesting services will be able to pay a fee to Pittsfield for the service.

At Onota Lake, herbicides were applied last fall to stop the proliferation of aquatic weeds, and the weed-harvesting won't

be necessary this year.

Robert S. Mellace, the city's director of community services, said a \$35,000 account is being set up in the fiscal 2001 Parks Department budget for the weed program. Previously, the city has paid the county for the service.

The city also plans to hire seasonal employees now being used by the county to operate the harvesters. They will be paid out of the Parks Department budget, Mellace said.

Doyle told the City Council last week that the county had originally planned to

5/28/00 WEEDS, continued on B4

Weeds from B1

turn the weed-harvesting equipment over to the state Department of Environmental Management with its other assets.

"I said if the equipment did get in DEM's hands, there's a good chance we might never see it again in this end of the state," Doyle said.

He added, "It's prudent for the city to take this over. I think it will be self-sufficient by sending them out with the fees."

The city will also work out an arrangement with Lanesboro to do weed-harvesting in the town's portion of Pontoosuc. In addition, the city will offer weed-harvesting for Laurel Lake in Lee and other county lakes in Stockbridge and Lenox.

The towns or lake districts will pay a fee to the city, based on an hourly rate and the type of equipment that's used, Mellace said.

"Our goal is to run a self-sustaining program from the income we take in," Mellace said. "My goal is to make sure it's not a los-

ing proposition for the city."

In addition, the city hopes to take over the county's Clean Rivers program, which is funded by a \$15,000 state grant. The city would offer to clear trees and other debris from rivers in communities that request the service.

The towns would have to provide in-kind services, such as obtaining the necessary approvals to enter the rivers and provide support, Mellace said.

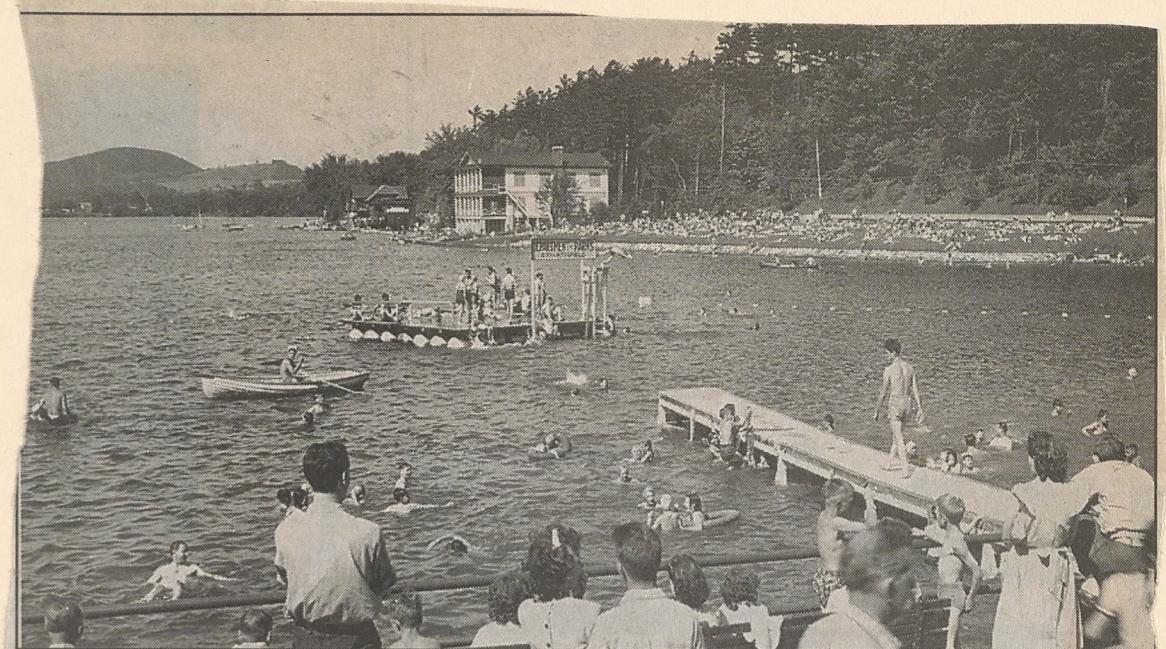
He added that if the weed-harvesting is completed in August, the seasonal employees would be immediately laid off or used in the Clean Rivers program.

Mellace said he has sent a letter to the agency that administers the Clean Rivers grant, offering to have the city take over the program. "Otherwise, the program is probably going to die," he said.

The program will be presented to the City Council at its June 13 meeting.

The weed-harvesting equipment includes a shore conveyor belt, a mechanical rake, a transport barge, two dump trucks and a pickup.

5/28/00



Pontoosuc Lake was a popular spot in the summer of 1946 for swimming, boating or relaxing.

5/27/00

City will accept county weed equipment

The city is poised to take ownership of county weed harvesting equipment on July 1 when county government ceases to exist, according to Mayor Gerald Doyle, Jr.

Doyle told city councilors on Wednesday that he will soon unveil details of a transfer of county-owned weed harvesting equipment to the city, as well as a plan to oversee weed harvesting this summer at Pontoosuc Lake and other county waters.

A fee schedule will be designed to accommodate use of the equipment by other municipalities, Doyle said, adding that the weed harvesting program should be "self-sufficient."

The mayor said that he lobbied county commissioners against an original plan to transfer the equipment to the state department of environmental management. "If those weed harvesters got into the hands of the state ... chances are we'd never see them again," he said.

County commissioners recently

voted to transfer county government's entire fleet of harvesting equipment to Pittsfield, with the caveat that other communities be allowed to use the equipment.

The equipment includes two weed harvesters with trailers, a shore conveyor, mechanical rake and transport barge. In addition, the city will receive two 1987 Ford dump trucks along with other equipment and tools to support weed harvesting.

Since most of the equipment has fully depreciated in value, the total package of equipment is worth approximately \$177,000, according to the county. Replacement value, however, would be significantly higher.

Doyle said that the county will oversee the program through June 30, with the city taking over the following day. Technically, the mayor added, two seasonal employees are included in the package to operate the machinery.

The mayor said that the two

5/25/00

Glen Place or Starplex Entertainment.

Onota Lake weeds to get the treatment: Application of herbicide begins today

By Erik Arvidson
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The contractor hired by the city to control the growth of aquatic weeds at Onota Lake will begin applying a herbicide today to areas of the lake where Eurasian milfoil survived last summer's "whole-lake" treatment.

Joseph O. Guzzo, city councilor for Ward 7, said this is the second year of the two-year weed treatment program, which includes the application of the herbicide Reward in about 100 acres of the

617-acre lake.

"Last year, we did the whole lake treatment with Sonar. This year, we're doing a follow-up treatment in areas where there are indications there may be Eurasian milfoil coming back," Guzzo said.

In four areas

The herbicide will be applied in four areas where the contractor, Aquatic Control Technologies, was able to rake up weeds in the early stages of regrowth.

Those areas include the South Cove, near the Girls Inc. camp on the west side, and two areas in the North Cove, Guzzo said.

"These are areas that proved to be a little tough in getting the milfoil under control," he said.

The lake will be closed today as a precaution, and the city has already posted signs saying that the lake is off-limits to swimming or any recreational use.

"The warning label on the Reward doesn't require closing the lake. But we're doing it as an extra precaution. You can't use the water for irrigation, watering cows or plants for 30 days," he said.

Guzzo added that he has received many complaints about a thick weed on the surface of the water, which he said is a curly pond weed, a native plant, not the milfoil.

"The curly pond weed is a good weed to have. It does grow tall like

the milfoil," he said. However, he added that the curly pond weed, like a spring flower, blooms and then dies off in early summer, so there is no need to treat it.

He added that the pond weed stifles the growth of the Eurasian milfoil.

Last year was the first chemical treatment for Onota Lake. The \$125,000 contract with Aquatic Control Technologies includes two years of treatment as well as a final report and recommendations on a long-term lake-management plan by the contractor, Guzzo said.

There were three applications of the herbicide Sonar last year. Reward is more designed for "spot treatments" in areas of the lake where the weeds weren't eradicated.



7/13/00

Buried treasure



With summer in full swing, many families headed for Burbank Park this week to enjoy Onota Lake.

Last year, the city completed a \$1 million upgrade of the park, with new sidewalks, parking lots and play areas. The beach and swimming areas were also restored.

A sandy Kaitlyn Winters, 4, found a great way to keep cool on the beach, with some help from Tasha Berkeley.

Additional photos, page 24.

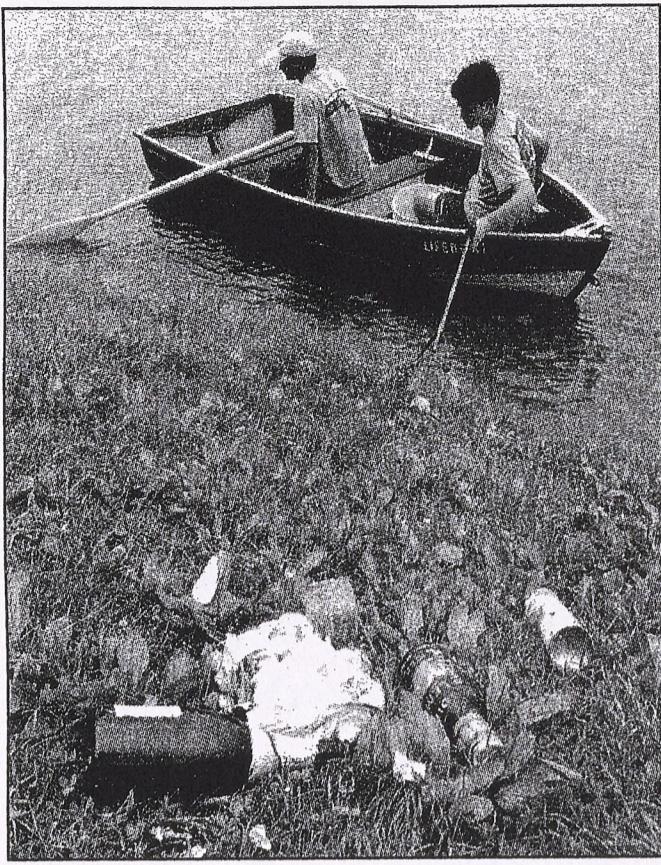


Photo by David Bruneau
Lifeguards Evan Caprari, left, and Shaun Kelleher search the beach at Burbank Park for garbage thrown into Onota Lake by vandals over the weekend.

Vandals trash beach at Onota

By Erik Arvidson
and Lisa Gosselin
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The public beach and swimming area at Burbank Park on Onota Lake were closed to the public over the weekend after unidentified vandals threw several barrels of unsightly trash, including used diapers, into the water.

Robert S. Mellace, the city's director of community services, said the facilities at Burbank Park have been taped off while the area is cleaned up and the city's Health Department samples the water for E. coli bacteria.

The trash dumping, which was found by city parks employees early Sunday morning, is the latest and most serious of a string of vandalism incidents at Burbank Park over the last several weeks, Mellace said.

"Hopefully, the E. coli test will come back negative," Mellace said. "But we thought it would be better to be on the side of conservative. With this weather, there aren't a lot of people swimming."

Mellace said there were three or four barrels filled with discarded food, diapers, bottles and cans floating in the water. He added that the Health Department tests the water for bacteria weekly, and health officials decided to push up that test to yesterday because of the wastes in the water.

According to Mellace, vandals last weekend pulled the park's rose bushes out of the ground and left them there. There have also been incidents of people tearing up the grass with vehicles and ripping handicapped sign poles out of the ground.

"It seems like this year we've had a lot of incidents of minor vandalism," Mellace said. "A lot of this happens late at night. Our park security is there until dark, and the Police Department has tried to increase patrols. But it's not as if there is anybody stationed there for 24 hours."

Last year, there were virtually no incidents of vandalism, Mellace said.

The city last spring completed a \$1 million renovation of Burbank Park.

The project included the repaving of both parking lots, repaving of a section of Lakeway Drive leading into the park, the extension of the boat launch "pad" into Onota Lake,

TRASH, continued on A4

Trash from A1 8/16/00

replacement of the railing on the fishing pier, reconstruction of the beach in front of the bathhouse, and the construction of a handicapped-accessible walkway along the lakeshore from the bathhouse to the south parking lot.

"A lot of people who had stopped going to the park have returned," Mellace said. "It's just unfortunate that some people feel they have to go down there and do these acts of vandalism. It just takes away from the legitimate uses of the park."

Mellace said the Parks Commission has considered closing off the main entrance off Valentine Road with a gate at night, but those people who are "bent on doing something" could still get into Burbank Park in other ways.

The beach closed at 8 p.m. Saturday, although there are no gates to keep people out.

It remained closed Sunday and yesterday, with tape to keep visitors out, and it may not reopen until later today, said park security officer Ralph Cahill.

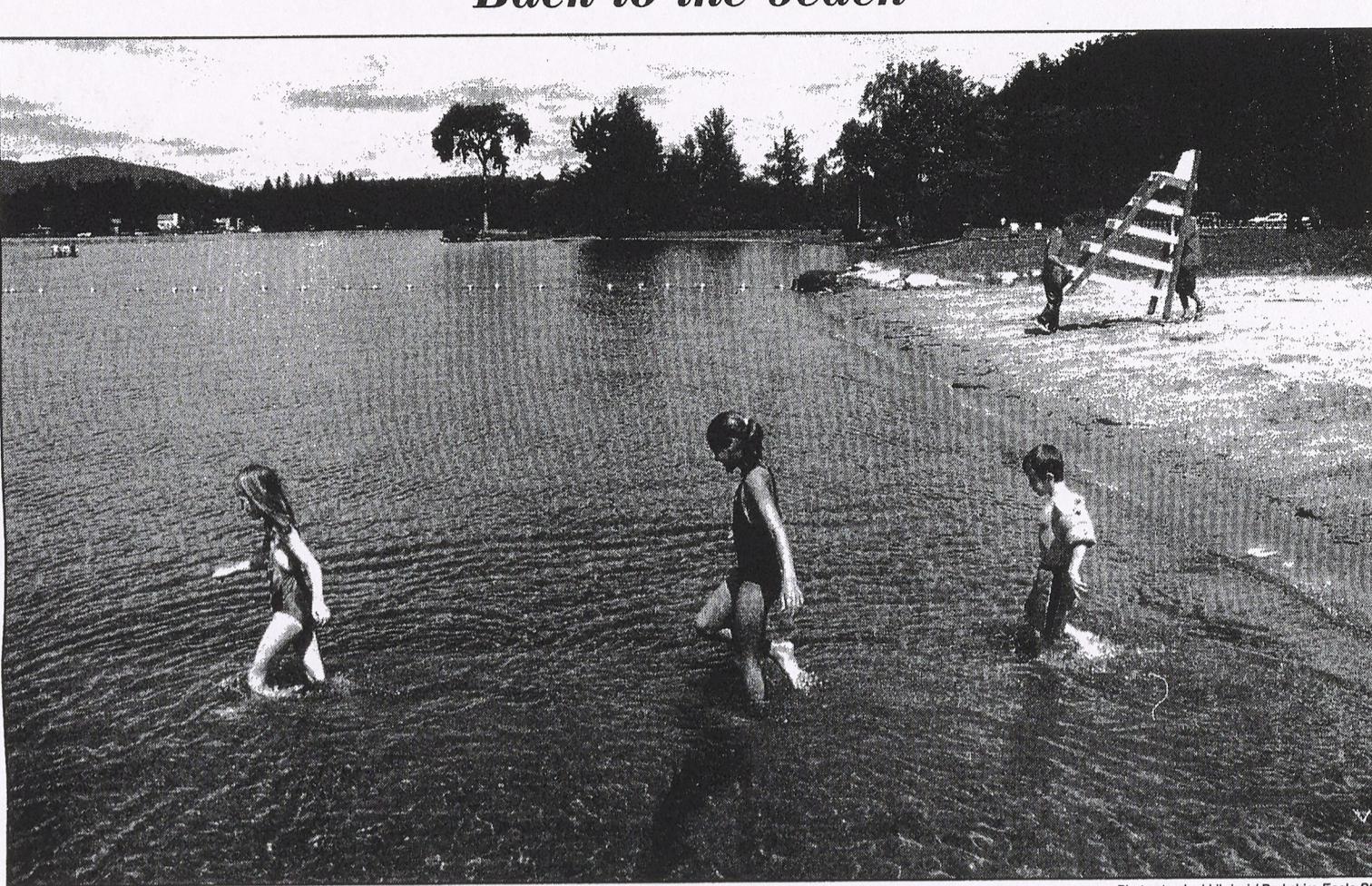
The currents carried some of the trash south, but most of it was contained within 25 feet of the shore, where the water is 8 to 10 feet deep, Cahill said.

About 20 people, including lifeguards and the maintenance crew, worked Sunday and yesterday to comb the bottom of the lake for broken glass and trash.

On Saturday morning, park officials found broken bottles around the bathhouse.

The incidents were reported to the Environmental and Pittsfield Police, although Pittsfield Police Capt. Cosmo Spezzafarro said an official investigation is not under way.

Because the barrels dumped into the lake came from the park, the case cannot be considered illegal dumping and the trash would hold no clues to identify the vandals, he said.



Photos by Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff
From left, Jamie Vogel, 9, Ashlee Quinn, 9, and Eric Vogel, 6, are the first ones into the water at the Burbank Park swimming area in Pittsfield yesterday afternoon after the city reopened the beach. Tests for excessive coliform levels were negative.

City reopens public beach at Burbank

By Erik Arvidson
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The city Health Department yesterday reopened the public swimming area and beach at Burbank Park on Onota Lake after tests of water samples for E. coli bacteria came back negative.

The park had been closed since Sunday morning after city parks employees discovered that vandals had thrown several barrels filled with trash, including used diapers, into the swimming area.

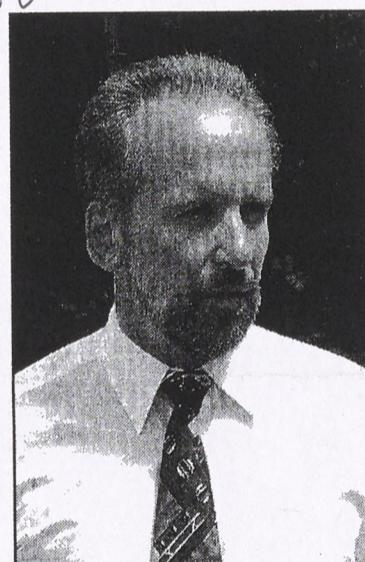
Robert S. Mellace, the city's director of community services, said he hoped people would return to enjoy the beach and swimming area and not be deterred by an act of vandalism.

"We don't really want an incident like this taking away from the positive energy going on here," Mellace said, adding that the city last year completed a \$1 million renovation to Burbank Park, which has increased the number of people using it.

The General Electric Elfun Society also plans to spend \$60,000 of its own money to reno-

vate the Controy Pavilion at Burbank Park.

On sunnier days, as many as 500 people come to Burbank Park to go swimming, rollerblade and have picnics, Mellace said.



Director of
Community
Services
Robert S. Mellace
said he hoped
that city
residents would
enjoy the beach
and swimming
area and not be
deterred by an
act of vandalism.

whether the water was safe for swimming.

Richard and Joy Schmidt of Pittsfield sat in a grassy area near the beach with their neighbor, Karen Vogel. They knew from reading the newspaper that the beach was closed, but they came hoping it would be reopened.

"Kids can get crazy. When they do something foolish, they don't realize the impact on the community," Joy Schmidt said.

Although there are no youth suspects believed to be responsible, Mellace said he believes the vandals were youths because of the "mischievous nature" of the vandalism.

"I think the kids just don't have enough to do to occupy their time," Vogel said. She added that she used to come to Burbank Park as a youth, but no one was destructive because they "had a certain respect for the environment."

Mellace said the trash dumping was the latest in a string of recent incidents at Burbank Park, which also included vandals pulling rose

BEACH, continued on B4

Beach from B1 8/16/00

bushes out of the ground, tearing up grassy areas with vehicles, and pulling handicapped-parking signs out of the ground.

He said he has spoken with Police Chief Anthony J. Riello, who indicated that the police will assist whenever possible but can't put on extra patrols to have 24-hour coverage of Burbank Park.

Park security officers are on duty from dawn until dusk. Otherwise, there is no supervision of the park.

At about 1 p.m., the park was reopened after city health officials said the tests showed the tests for E. coli bacteria determined it was within safe limits.

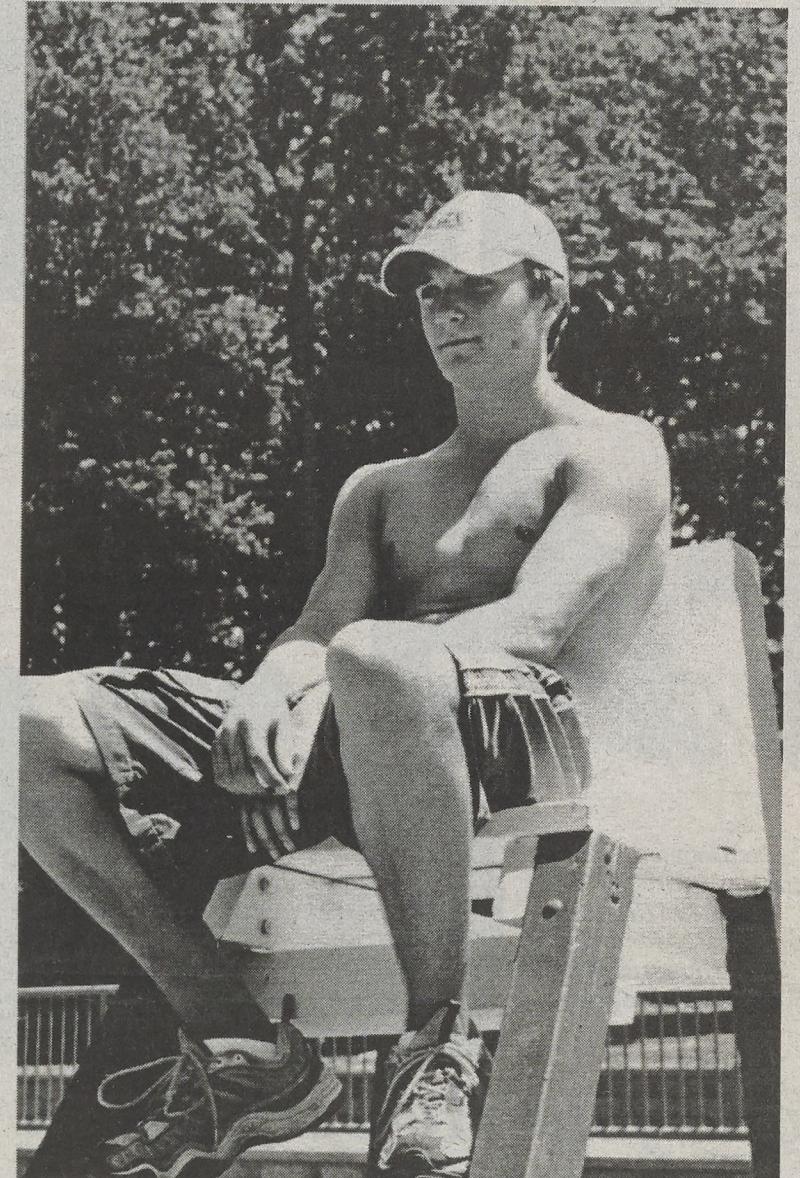
BEACH PATROL



Sandcastles sprouted on the Burbank Park beach on a sunny Wednesday afternoon.



Young artist Taylor DeGroff created sand sculpture.



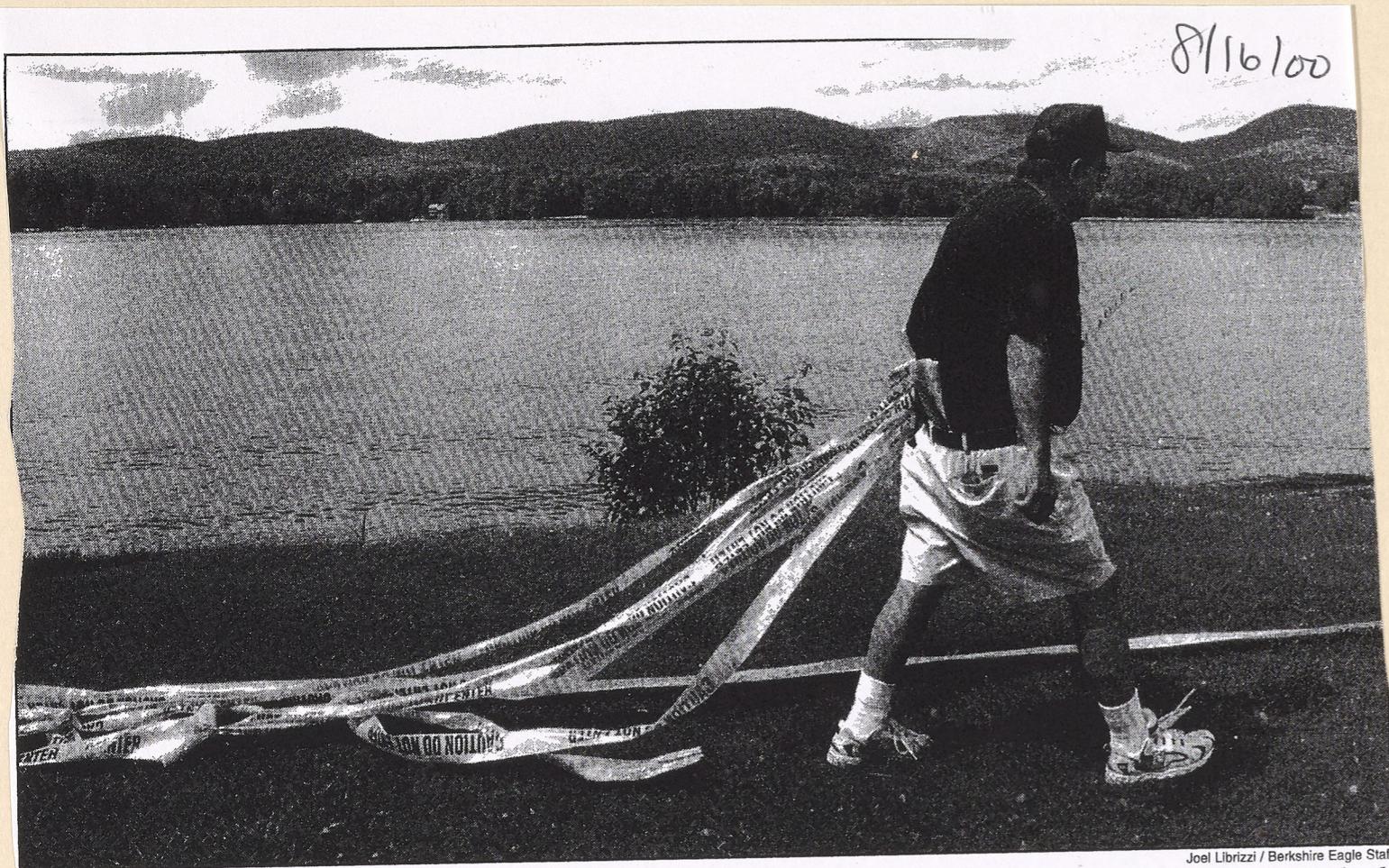
Lifeguard Evan Caprari kept a sharp eye on young swimmers.



Beach boy Travis Riccardi enjoyed the sun, the sand and the surf.



This year, Burbank Park features a snack bar for those in need of refreshment. Quentin Anderson, Peter Anderson, Ericka Hanger, Soleil Hanger and Trish Daigle took a break from their beach blanket to get a bite to eat.



Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

City parks employee Tom Cowlin yesterday removes the yellow tape that had been put up to prevent people from using the Burbank Park public swimming area at Onota Lake. City officials reopened the beach after determining coliform levels were safe.

Sunday, October 15, 2000

Ballpark question set for ballot

By Erik Arvidson
Eagle Statehouse Bureau

BOSTON — Voters in most of Pittsfield will have the opportunity to weigh in on the proposed multi-use stadium project when they cast their ballots on Nov. 7 and find a question regarding the future of Wahconah Park.

But to some legislators and proponents of the new stadium, Question 10, sponsored by County Treasurer Peter G. Arlos, will only amount to an opportunity for people to show their affinity for Wahconah Park, and that the question is badly-worded and meaningless.

The question will appear in the 3rd Berkshire District, which state Rep. Peter J. Larkin, D-Pittsfield, represents, and which covers all of Pittsfield except Ward 4 and Ward 1B.

"This is going to be a big victory," Arlos said in an interview. He said the point is to demonstrate the city's support for its

Skeptics question validity of item about Wahconah Park's future

ballpark, which he thinks is being overlooked in the quest for a new stadium.

The question, which Arlos placed on the ballot via a petition, will appear as follows: "Shall the representative from this district be instructed to vote in favor of legislation to provide state funds to upgrade and renovate Wahconah Park to meet minor league baseball franchise standards?"

Moral obligation'

Arlos denied that the question is non-binding and insisted that as a public police question, there is a "moral obligation of the representative to follow through," if it's approved.

Proponents of the stadium said the

question is a waste of time because Wahconah Park is owned by the city of Pittsfield and the state would not put up millions to renovate a city-owned piece of property.

In addition, minor league baseball franchise owners, including William Gladstone, who owns the Pittsfield Mets franchise, have said Wahconah Park is unsuitable.

City-funded studies have also found that it would take upwards of \$11 million to rebuild Wahconah Park to bring it up to standards.

Arlos argued that a large piece of the new stadium's financing scheme comes from state grants.

"What I wanted to do was to be consis-

tent with the new stadium," he said. "I could have put city funds or state funds."

City Councilor at large Matthew M. Kerwood said if Pittsfield made it a priority, it could potentially go to the Legislature to ask for funding to rehabilitate Wahconah Park. But he added that the debate isn't whether or not there is state money available.

"I think the debate has gone beyond the scope of Peter's petition," Kerwood said.

"It's a different animal now. Professional baseball has made it very clear that even if Wahconah Park was renovated to minor league standards, it's still off the table. They don't want to play there."

Kerwood also said that while proponents of renovating Wahconah Park say the renovations would qualify for historical grant money, Wahconah Park is not yet listed on the state's Register of Historic Places, which is a requirement.

Pittsfield, Massachusetts, Tuesday, October 17, 2000

Source of worry: How did PCBs get into the river's West Branch?

By Jack Dew
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The recent discovery of PCB contamination near a city park that General Electric cleaned just two years ago has confirmed the fears of a number of advocacy groups and is raising concerns that the contamination in Pittsfield is not yet fully understood.

The state Department of Environmental Protection announced two weeks ago that large concentrations of PCBs have been found along a strip of riverbank that separates Dorothy Amos Park from the West Branch of the Housatonic River.

Though the PCB levels are high, preliminary tests show the contamination is concentrated in a small area. The DEP is now in the process of fleshing out its initial results with further testing and received approval yesterday to drill monitoring wells along the riverbank to determine if the PCBs have spread to the ground water.

"We truly don't know where the PCBs on the bank originated," said J. Lyn Cutler, a section chief of special projects for the DEP. "Whether someone poured PCBs there, whether it drained off on the bank and ran down ... That is what our investigation is focusing

on."

When the announcement of the contamination was first made at a monthly meeting of the Citizens Coordinating Council, it was greeted with frustration and worry by groups that have been vocally pushing GE, the DEP and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to conduct extensive testing at any site where PCB contamination might hide.

"None of the agencies or any of the outside people have any idea, any inkling, of how massive and widespread the contamination is," said Barbara Cianfarini, a member of Citizens for PCB

PCBs, continued on A4



A sign warning that the state is testing the West Branch of the Housatonic affixed to the chain-link fence separating Dorothy Amos Park off West Street.

PCBs from A1

10/17/00
Removal who sits on the Citizens Coordinating Council.

"I believe this is a trend," she said. "Both the Housatonic River Initiative and the Citizens for PCB Removal have been advocating greater testing and more testing based on anecdotal evidence, not merely on the clear-cut indicators that GE has insisted on.... There are a lot of anecdotal stories from workers in GE who are slowly but surely passing away."

Document stories

"HRI in particular has tried to document as many of these stories as possible and submit them to the agencies. History has shown us [that] the agencies tend to drag their feet on these things until something comes up that really makes it impossible to ignore," she said.

The groups say they are frustrated by the slow response of GE, the DEP and the EPA. In the case of Dorothy Amos Park, GE spent an undisclosed amount of money in 1998 to remove PCBs and \$150,000 on renovations, building three basketball courts and installing a swing set and jungle gym.

But the DEP's recent tests show that PCB "hot spots" ranging from 2,300 to 8,900 parts per million have been discovered just six feet from the cleaned and restored park. By comparison, state law requires residential properties to contain no more than 2 parts per million of PCBs.

When GE cleaned the park in 1998, its tests showed the contamination was found only above a certain elevation — 990 feet above sea level. Based on those results, Cutler said, GE cleaned down only to that level. The riverbanks, which slope sharply downward, fell below the cutoff and so were neither tested nor cleaned, despite their proximity to contaminated property.

In 1999, an EPA sample taken from the riverbed adjacent to Dorothy Amos Park revealed a PCB hot spot of 7,630 parts per million. The DEP took on the responsibility of conducting further tests, and struck an agreement with GE in which the DEP would do the work and GE would pay the bill.

After a number of weather-related delays, in August the DEP was finally able to perform the tests that revealed the contamination a few feet from the park.

Despite its agreement to pay for the testing, GE has said there are "other potential sources" for the contamination in the West Branch. Dorothy Amos Park was once the home of Perlman & Sons scrapyard, where it is believed

GE transformers were stripped. Those transformers contained large amounts of PCB-laden oil that GE used as an insulator and coolant. In 1977, the government banned the use of PCBs, or polychlorinated biphenyls, which are a potential carcinogen in humans.

In the East Branch and lower reaches of the river, GE is already performing an extensive cleanup and the EPA is preparing its plans for the next phase of work, which will remove PCBs from the GE plant and down to the confluence of the East and West branches.

Both the EPA and GE's responsibility for the cleanup is outlined in a 1998 cleanup agreement, now awaiting action by a federal judge sitting in Springfield who must decide whether to accept or reject the settlement.

Beno Friedman and the Housatonic River Initiative objected to the consent decree and sought to intervene in court proceedings, hoping to convince the court to throw out the document. The HRI reached an agreement with the EPA, however, and withdrew its request to intervene.

While the HRI's members have continued to speak out against GE, Friedman said the city has accepted too much risk by signing off on the consent decree and has not fought enough for its rights, the result of a culture of acceptance that has developed over the decades.

Emotional effect

"We have this godfather that built Pittsfield into a one-company town. That presence has had to have had an enormous psychological and emotional effect on how loudly people are willing to speak out," he said.

"You had economic viability connected to [GE]; the political establishment had to bear in mind the effects of saying anything against a manufacturer and employer of that size."

Under terms of the consent decree, GE and the EPA are allowed to dispose of up to 50,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil on GE's 245-acre manufacturing site. That landfill sits across the street from Allendale School, where contamination was detected and removed a few years ago.

"It is highly unlikely that they could have taken those PCBs to any other town in the country and, in the middle of a residential population, in close proximity to a school for young children, sited that dump," Friedman said.

"But not only were they ultimately able to do it, they did it with essentially everyone's blessing. It is unthinkable to me that this could have occurred anywhere else in the country."

Pittsfield claims Ruth 15 win

Eagle Staff Reports

Pittsfield scored early and often yesterday to beat South Central 13-3 in the Berkshire County age 15 Babe Ruth League tournament.

The second game of yesterday's twin bill was suspended in the second inning with Adams leading 7-2.

That game will be resumed tonight at 5:30 at Pinegrove Park.

The team defeated in that game will face Southern Berkshire tomorrow night at 5:30 p.m.

In the Berkshire County age 14 tournament being played at Balardini Field in Adams, Adams was leading South Central 7-3 when the game was stopped due to rain in the bottom of the fifth.

That game will resume today at 5:30 at Balardini Field.

The second game of yesterday's doubleheader never got underway. That will be made up today when Pittsfield and Dalton play at the new Nessacus field in Dalton at 5:30.

Pittsfield 13, South Central 3

Pittsfield backed starter Brad Shove with four runs in the first inning. Shove, Dan Seseske and Steve Papa all had RBI singles in the rally.

South Central's Andy Romeo's two-run single in the second made the score 4-2, but Pittsfield plated two more runs in the bottom of the inning, and added five more runs in the fourth.

Conor Storie had a two-run single in the fourth.

Papa pitched the final three innings in relief of Shove to get the win for Pittsfield.

Babe Ruth corrections

In the Babe Ruth 15-year old tournament game at Pinegrove Park on Saturday between Dalton and North Adams, Justin Espo-
sito scored the winning run in the bottom of the ninth when Eric Pratt's ground ball was mis-
played. Two other players had been mentioned in an earlier account of the game.

7/10/2000



Tom Ryan / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Members of the Pittsfield Babe Ruth age 15 championship team mob Farin Small after the first of his two home runs at Pinegrove Park in Dalton yesterday.

7/18/2000

C8 — The Berkshire Eagle, Thursday, July 13, 2000

Pittsfield, Adams advance to Ruth tourney title games

Eagle Staff Reports

Pittsfield advanced to the championship game of the Berkshire County Babe Ruth age 14 tournament by routing North Adams, 10-0, yesterday at Balardini Field.

Adams, meanwhile, did the same in the Babe Ruth age 15 tournament, earning a come-from-behind 5-3 win over Pittsfield at Pinegrove Park.

Both winners will wait for their opponents to come out of the loser's bracket. The title games are set for Saturday at 1 p.m. at the respective host sites of the tournament. If the game would be played following the first game.

Pittsfield 10, North Adams 0

ADAMS — The game ended after five innings due to the 10-run rule. Pittsfield's five-run rally in the top of the fifth made the score 10-0. Pittsfield reliever Dan Larrow chucked the bottom of the fifth to preserve the lead and the win.

Dan Walter started the game and went four innings, striking out five while issuing no walks.

Shane Broderick hit a two-run double in the second for a 2-0 while Walter's RBI triple and Joe Wasuk's RBI single in the third bumped the lead to 4-0.

Walter had an RBI single in the fourth and Mike Massery's two-run single in the fifth sparked the final rally.

Walter finished with two hits while Matt Coty chipped in with a double for Pittsfield.

Curt Gazaille, Josh Card and Tim Maselli pitched for North Adams, which had hits from B.J.

Vanluling, Card and Kyle Jolin.

Adams 5, Pittsfield 3

DALTON — This game went back and forth early. Adams took a 2-0 lead in the first on a sacrifice fly by Jon Koperniak and a fielder's choice grounder by Gabe Lamb. Pittsfield, however, answered with two runs in the visiting second.

Conor Storie walked, stole second and scored on a single by Dan Seseske. A fielder's choice grounder by Josh Stoklosa plated Seseske.

Pittsfield then took the lead with a single tally in the third. That came on a long homer to right-center field by Farin Small.

But Adams had the answers in a three-run fifth. Ryan Larabee's single scored Mitch Belanger and Tom Bradbury, who had singled and doubled respectively. Koperniak eventually scored Belanger with a single.

Tom Oxton earned the pitching win in relief of Larabee, who came out in the fourth. Chris Brown went the distance for Pittsfield, striking out six and allowing eight hits.

Corrections

In a game played in Dalton on Tuesday, Dalton outscored South Central 15-5. Kevin Majchrowski had a three-run triple and four RBIs for the winners and Bredan Barschdorff had two hits including a three-run double.

Brad Horth, meanwhile, had three hits. Some of this information was reported incorrectly in yesterday's Eagle.

Ruth from C1

take the lead for good.

Adams starter Ryan Larabee walked Brian Hanley to open the inning. Billy Porter followed with an infield single, and Larabee came all the way around to score when the ball was thrown away twice.

An inning later, Small's first homer, a solo blast over the left field fence, made the score 4-2.

Pittsfield added two more runs in the fifth, two Adams miscues and a hit by Seseske playing a role in the outcome of that stanza.

Adams had a chance to get back in the game in the sixth, but a stellar defensive play by Shove prevented them from scoring more than just one run.

Adam Poplaski walked to start the inning and went to second on a base hit by John Kellogg. Tom Bradbury then lined a one-hopper

up the middle that appeared to be headed for center field. But Shove left his feet, snared the ball and fired to second in time to get the force out.

Ryan Larabee followed with a single that scored Poplaski, but Shove retired Adams slugger John Koperniak to end the inning.

"That was a huge, huge play Brad made," said Kendall. "That ball gets through, and it would have changed the entire complexion of the game. They had the heart of their order coming up."

Pittsfield added four more runs in the bottom of the sixth. Shove drove in the first two with his blast, and one out later, Small hit a ball in the right-center field gap and raced around the bases. The final run scored when Storie doubled and scored on a single by Hanley.

Adams scored twice in the seventh on a two-run single by Dan Goodman, but Shove retired the next two hitters to end the game.

"I thought we were in it right up until the last out," said Adams coach Ernie Wellington. Ryan did a great job on the mound and kept us close. We just couldn't get that one big hit when we needed it. We're capable of putting a lot of runs on the board in a hurry. Tonight, we just didn't do it."

"Brad was right at the point where I thought I might have to take him out, but we wanted him to finish it if he could," said Kendall. "I gave him two more hitters, and he got them both out."

"I think we were pretty confident, even after we lost, that we could win," said Small. "We just concentrated first on beating them once and then doing it again."

Larabee pitched the first five innings and allowed six runs, three of which were unearned. He also finished with two hits.

Pittsfield earns another chance against Adams in Ruth 15s

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

DALTON — In a perfect world, Brad Shove would spend all day, every day on a baseball field. Yesterday, the young Pittsfield player did just that to the fullest, playing two full games and part of a third in two different locations.

Shove, who earlier in the day played right field for the Tyler Aces in the county American Legion championship series at Clapp Park in Pittsfield, went 5-for-5 and drove in five runs as the Pittsfield forced an if game with a 13-8 win over Adams in the Berkshire County Babe Ruth tournament championship game played yesterday at Pinegrove Park.

Tonight's game for all the marbles will be tonight at 5:30, also at Pinegrove.

"I know this team can really hit the

ball, and today we showed that," said Pittsfield manager Buck Kendall, whose team avenged a 5-3 loss to Adams earlier in the tournament. "The first time we played Adams, we hit the ball right at people. Today, we hit it where they weren't."

Tied 4-4, Pittsfield took the lead for good in the third when it scored four times, and all those runs came after two were out.

John Phelps reached on a fielder's choice, went to third on an errant pickoff throw and then scored on a wild pitch. Chris Brown then walked and went to second on a balk. Josh Stoklosa, who scored five times in the game, followed with a base hit to second Brown to third. Shove then beat out an infield hit and

RUTH 15s, continued on C3

Ruth 14s from C1

star team with the exception of one kid. We all knew they could play the game pretty well."

Earlier in the tournament, Robinson had tossed a one-hitter in a win over Dalton. Yesterday, the hard-throwing right-hander was just as tough, and it made for a long day for the North Adams batsmen.

Pittsfield did all its scoring in two innings, as they plated three in both the second and fifth.

In the second, Mike Boino singled with two out and went to second when Joe Wasuk walked. Dan Larrow singled home Boino, and Matt Coty's hit scored Wasuk. The final run scored on an error.

In the fifth, Pittsfield again used some two-out magic. Matt Ward walked and went to second when Robinson's ground ball was misplayed. Boino followed with a base hit to score Ward, and Dan Walter's hit scored Robinson. Boino later scored on a pair of errors.

"When these kids are focused, I think they can play with anybody," said Ward, whose team has a first-round bye in the state tournament and will begin play on Sunday at 3 p.m. "If we keep playing the way we have been, I think we should be OK."

Mike Wood pitched the first 5 1/3 innings for North Adams. Josh Card finished up.

GE takes Ruth title

PITTSFIELD — GE is the city Babe Ruth age 14-15 champion.

GE, first half champion, took two of three games from second-half champion Oliver Auto Body, to claim the city crown.

With the series tied 1-1, GE defeated Oliver 7-6 in the final game to win the championship. GE had won the first game, also by a 7-6 score. Oliver, meanwhile, had taken the second game by an 8-2 mark.

GE outfielder Steve Uliasz made a running grab in the seventh inning for the final out to preserve the victory.

In the title game, Steve Papa got the victory on the mound. Joe Taikowski, Mike Boino and Tommy Martin had two hits each for the winners in the final.

Pittsfield Ruth 14s bow out in the rain

Eagle Staff Reports

WORCESTER — Mike Tuohy, manager of the Pittsfield age 14 Babe Ruth all-stars, went down his pitching staff one by one looking desperately for an answer.

Seven pitchers and 15 walks later, Tuohy realized he was never going to get one.

Pittsfield pitchers struggled to find the plate all game, and as a result, Blackstone Valley bounced the team from the loser's bracket of the West State Championships, 11-9, last night under a steady rain at McLaughlin Field.

Blackstone Valley moved on to the finals against undefeated Southside, where it needed two straight victories to advance to the New England championships.

"Having 15 walks was a real big difference," said Tuohy, whose team had beaten Blackstone Valley 11-4 earlier in the double-elimination tournament. "Hitting wise we stayed with them. Without the walks we would have been right with them at the end."

"But I think it was difficult for both teams because of the weather. The wetness made the ball really heavy for the pitchers. I guess we just struggled with a little more than they did."

Pittsfield did manage to get off to an exceptional start, scoring six runs with the help of two Blackstone errors and RBI singles from Shane Perrault and John Martin.

But Blackstone didn't give the local

The city team led 8-3 before falling, 11-9.

boys much time to celebrate, coming back with three runs of its own in the bottom half of the inning to cut the Pittsfield lead to 6-3. Clean-up hitter Jim Bolen did all the damage with one swing, knocking a J.R. Robinson pitch deep over the centerfield fence for a three-run homer.

Pittsfield extended its lead to 8-3 in the third, capitalizing once again on a Blackstone error for the first run of the inning. Shane Broderick then doubled to score Matt Coty.

After that, however, it was downhill for Pittsfield. Bolen came in for the final three innings, and the Blackstone ace shut down the Pittsfield bats, limiting them to just one run over the last half of the game.

Meanwhile, Blackstone took advantage of the wild Pittsfield pitching staff, rallying for four runs in the third and three in the fifth to take a 10-8 lead. Blackstone, which only had three hits in the game, added an insurance run in the sixth.

Coty went 2-of-3 for Pittsfield with a pair of singles.

"They were a great bunch of kids, and we all had a lot of fun these past few weeks," Tuohy said. "We'll be heard from next year."

7/28/00

Ruth 15s from C1

went to second when the throw got away. Steve Papa followed with a double that scored both runs.

"I can't think of a better way to have spent the day," said Shove. "I played a role in three wins, and that was fun. I was kind of concerned about having to leave the second Legion came before it was over, and it was on my mind for awhile in this game. But I had a pretty good feeling about swinging the bat. Now, tomorrow [Monday], I get to pitch and I'll be ready."

Pittsfield would build a 13-4 lead before Adams made things interesting by scoring four runs in the bottom of the sixth.

Pittsfield starter Brown walked John Kellogg and Jeremy Levesque to open the inning. Tom Bradbury followed with a hit to score Kellogg and send Levesque to third. Bradbury stole second, and both runners scored on a base hit by Ryan Larabee.

Larabee took second on an error and then scored on a base hit by John Koperniak. Gabe Lamb followed with another base hit, but

Papa came on in relief and retired the next two hitters.

After Dan Goodman walked to load the bases, Papa retired Kellogg to end the inning.

"We knew Adams good hit, but Chris did a good job of keeping them off balance, and then Steve came in and shut the door," said Kendall. "We made them swing the bats and made the plays on defense."

Pittsfield scored twice in the first inning on a two-run single by Papa, but Adams came right back and took a 3-2 lead in the bottom of the frame. Bradbury and Larabee opened the game with singles, and both came home on a three-run dinger by Lamb.

"We're a much better baseball team that what we showed today," said Adams manager Ernie Wellington. "I don't know if these kids got here thinking we already had the game won, but we definitely weren't ready."

"For the first five innings, our heads just weren't in it. Maybe this is a good thing, though, that we got beat today. "Now we'll have to come back out and give 100 percent and play better baseball."

DALTON — The loser's bracket. To put it plainly, you don't want to be there.

But the Pittsfield Babe Ruth age 15 all-star team didn't panic when it landed in that position after losing to Adams earlier in the Berkshire County tournament.

In fact, they stayed pretty confident. Yesterday, they backed that confidence with a 10-5 win over Adams at Pinegrove Park to win the Berkshire County title.

Farin Small belted two home runs and Brad Shove pitched a complete-game eight-hitter and struck out seven to pace Pittsfield to the win. Shove also homered in the title game.

"This whole tournament was about coming in and not falling into the loser's bracket," said Pittsfield manager

7/18/00

RUTH, continued on C3

Pittsfield comes all the way back to win Ruth 15 crown

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

Buck Kendall, whose team will open play in the state tournament in Douglas on Sunday at 4:30 p.m. "Having come out of the loser's bracket last year in the 14-year old tournament, we didn't panic when Adams beat us, because we knew we could fight our way out of it. We just needed out pitchers to throw strikes, play solid defense behind them and get some timely hits. We did all three."

"I think we learned from last year not to give up and that it is possible to come back and win it," said Shove, whose team forced the if game with a 13-8 win yesterday. "Now hopefully we can do a little better than we did in Leominster last year."

Trailing 2-0 after one inning, Adams rallied to tie the game in the top of the second. Pittsfield, however, answered with a single run in the bottom of the inning to

7/18/00

Pittsfield 14s win county title behind Robinson's 4-hitter

Eagle Staff Reports

NORTH ADAMS — Consistency in a 14-year old baseball player is never a sure thing. Despite that, Dick Ward, the manager of the age 14 Pittsfield Babe Ruth all-stars would bet the house on his squad coming up with a pretty good effort every time out.

Yesterday in the Berkshire County finals at Joe Wolfe Field, Ward saw his nine give him just that.

J.R. Robinson tossed a four-hitter and struck out 11 to lead Pittsfield to a 6-0 win over North Adams and the right to advance to the West State Tournament at McLaughlin Field in Leominster that begins on Saturday.

Yesterday's game was scheduled for Balardini Field in Adams but was moved due to the rains on Saturday night.

"J.R. pitched another great game, and this team has been very consistent from top to bottom the entire tournament," said Ward. "We knew we had a pretty good shot at winning, because we've got the entire 13-year old all

7/17/00

RUTH 14s, continued on xx

Pittsfield 10, Adams 5



Tom Ryan / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Pittsfield's Farin Small comes around to score on an inside-the-park home run while Adams catcher Jeremy Levesque shows the ball to the umpire while claiming he made the tag. Small was ruled safe and finished with two home runs in the 10-5 victory to clinch the Berkshire County championship.

Pittsfield Babe Ruth league to meet

A meeting of the Pittsfield Babe Ruth League will take place Monday at 7 p.m. in the Springside House Parks and Recreation office located on 874 North St. Plans for the upcoming season will be discussed. All board members and coaches are asked to attend.

Anyone interested in coaching, umpiring or scorekeeping are invited to attend. Information, call Mike Toner at 443-0951. 3/31/00

Pittsfield Babe Ruth meeting Monday

The Pittsfield 13-15 Babe Ruth League will hold a meeting Monday night at 7. The meeting will take place at Springside House, 874 North Street.

In addition, the league is still seeking coaches for the 13-year old division.

Information: Mike Toner, 443-0951. 3/29/00

Pittsfield Babe Ruth to meet March 20

The Pittsfield Babe Ruth League will hold an organizational meeting on March 20 at Springside House, 874 North Street, at 7 p.m.

The league is seeking candidates to coach in either the 13-year old, or the 14-15 year old league.

Information: Mike Toner, 443-0951. 3/14/00

Babe Ruth 16-18 signups this weekend

Registration for the Berkshire County senior Babe Ruth (age 16-18) program will be held tomorrow from 10 until 2, and on Sunday from noon until 3 p.m. The registration will take place at the Berkshire Mall's Food Court.

Prospective players should bring a copy of their birth certificate.

Information: Jack Roy, 442-7540. 3/31/00

Senior Babe Ruth league sets registration

Berkshire Senior Babe Ruth registration will be taken March 24-25 and April 1-2 at the Berkshire Mall in the food court area. Tryouts will be held on April 15 at 10 a.m., noon and 2 p.m. at the Common field in Pittsfield, and on April 16 at 1 and 3 p.m., also at the Common.

Players should bring birth certificates and the league is also looking for new coaches. Information: Call Jack Roy at 442-7540. 3/21/00

Area Sports

Babe Ruth spaghetti dinner tomorrow

A spaghetti dinner and evening of dancing to benefit the Berkshire County Senior Babe Ruth program will be held tomorrow night at the Polish Community Club, 55 Linden Street, Pittsfield.

The festivities will run from 6 p.m. until midnight. Tickets are \$7 for adults, \$5 for senior citizens and children under 12. Children under 5 will be admitted for free.

3/31/00

Pittsfield Babe Ruth signups April 15

Registration for the Pittsfield Babe Ruth Leagues will take place on Saturday, April 15, from 9 a.m. until noon, at Springside House, 874 North Street.

Players for the 13 and 14-15 year old divisions should sign up at this time.

Tryouts will begin on Saturday, April 29, at the First Street Common. Times will be announced at a later date.

4/11/00

City Babe Ruth league holding tryouts

Tryouts for the Pittsfield Babe Ruth League are scheduled at the Common today through Tuesday. Players age 13 in the Group A division will tryout today from 9 to noon and Monday starting at 6. Age 13 players in Group B will tryout 12:30 to 3:30 tomorrow and Tuesday beginning at 6.

Rain date for age 13 tryouts will be Wednesday at 6.

Tryouts for age 14-15 will be today starting at 12:30 and tomorrow starting at 4. Also, the final tryout will be Thursday at 6. Rain date for age 14-15 will be Friday at 6.

The league is encouraging players who have yet to register to do so at these times.

4/29/00

Pittsfield Babe Ruth ticket sales Sunday

The Pittsfield Babe Ruth Leagues will hold the annual season ticket sale on Sunday from 10 a.m. until noon.

Players, coaches and volunteers will canvass the city and will sell tickets for \$1 each. The players, coaches and parents should meet at Springside House, 874 North Street, at 9:30 a.m.

5/10/00

Babe Ruth season ticket sale is Sunday

The Pittsfield Babe Ruth League will hold its annual season ticket sale on Sunday between 10 a.m. and noon. Players, coaches and parents will meet at the Springside House at 874 North St. at 9:30 a.m.

Players and volunteers will be canvassing the city and will be selling season tickets for \$1 each. Proceeds will go toward league costs.

5/12/00

Pittsfield Babe Ruth teams win openers

Eagle Staff Reports

Two Pittsfield Babe Ruth all-star teams opened play in the West State tournament yesterday. Both walked away with wins.

In the 14-year-old tournament in Leominster, J.R. Robinson and Matt Ward combined on a seven-hitter to lead Pittsfield to an 11-4 win over Blackstone Valley.

With the victory, Pittsfield advanced to the winner's bracket final and will play the winner of last night's game between Westfield and South Side of Worcester tomorrow night at 6.

In the 15-year-old tournament in Douglas, Pittsfield rallied for seven runs in the bottom of the sixth inning to post a 14-10 come-from-behind win over Shrewsbury. Pittsfield will play Leominster in the winner's bracket final tomorrow at 1 p.m.

Pittsfield 14s win

LEOMINSTER — Tied 3-3, Pittsfield took the lead with an unearned run in the third, and then added four more runs in the fourth to take an 8-3 lead.

Ward had a two-run single and Dan Walter an RBI single in the fourth while Shane Perrault added a two-run single in the sixth.

"We didn't get too many hits, but the ones we did were timely and we played great defense,"

said Pittsfield manager Mike Touhey. "This was Matt's first time on the mound in the entire tournament, and he did a great job in relief of J.R."

Robinson and Joe Wasuk also had run scoring singles for Pittsfield.

Pittsfield 15s triumph

DOUGLAS — Trailing 8-2 after Shrewsbury scored five times in the top of the fifth, Pittsfield dug in and answered with 12 runs in its final two trips to the plate.

"After they scored those five runs, we kind of got together and decided that we'd better start playing some baseball," said Pittsfield manager Buck Kendall, whose team stole 10 bases. "We've been down before, but we know we can hit, and we know we can run. We just started doing both."

Pittsfield got five in the fifth and then took the lead in the sixth, a rally that included three straight walks. Joe Phelps, pinch-hitter John Porter and Brad Shove all had two-run singles in the inning.

Shove pitched two innings in relief to get the win. Chris Brown started and went three innings before being relieved by Steve Papa.

Shove finished with four hits and Dan Seseke had two for Pittsfield.

Ruth 15s eliminated in states

Eagle Staff Reports

DOUGLAS — Ugly.

That was how Buck Kendall, manager of the Pittsfield Babe Ruth age 15 all-stars, summed up his team's 16-6 loss to Shrewsbury in the loser's bracket of the state tournament yesterday at Soldiers Field.

The loss eliminated the city team from the state tournament.

For one, the weather was ugly.

Both teams were forced to play in a driving rain that turned a grassy outfield into a muddy swamp, and that led to the second ugly part of the contest — the errors.

The tough playing conditions caused both teams to struggle in the field.

But it was Pittsfield which committed six errors in the six-inning affair that endured the greatest difficulty, a problem that Kendall felt was the reason his team ended up one game short of a West sectional title.

7/27/00
RUTH, continued on C3

Ruth 15s eliminated in states

Eagle Staff Reports

"Before the game, I told our guys whoever makes the least amount of errors will win this game," Kendall said. "Shrewsbury made its share, we made a few more, and that cost us big. But the weather made it tough. There was no way we would have fielded how we did if the rain hadn't soaked the field."

Pittsfield's lead, however, was short-lived. Shrewsbury scored five runs in each of the next two innings and one each over the final three before the umpires called the game in sixth because of the 10-run rule.

Although Pittsfield was able to get runners on base throughout the game, its failure to bring those runners home with key hits plagued the team.

"We did everything we had to on the basepaths," Kendall said. "We probably had eight steals and weren't caught once. We just never got the hit when we needed it."

Pittsfield had just five hits in the contest, with Phelps accounting for two of the five.

Storie and Papa each had one hit. 7/27/00

Pittsfield Babe Ruth teams fall

Eagle Staff Reports

If the Pittsfield Babe Ruth baseball teams are going to advance in their tournaments, they'll have to do it the hard way.

The Pittsfield age 14 All-Stars lost to Worcester South Side 8-5 yesterday in Leominster, and will play tonight at 6 in the loser's bracket against Blackstone Valley. If that team sounds familiar, it's because Pittsfield pounded Blackstone Valley 11-4 earlier in the tournament.

The Pittsfield 15's also fell yesterday. Leominster scored a 13-2, mercy-rule

7/26/00
BABE, continued on C3

Babe from C1 7/16/00

win in Douglas. The game ended after five innings. Pittsfield next plays today at 1 against the winner of last night's Douglas-Shrewsbury game, which was not finished at deadline. Pittsfield beat Shrewsbury 14-10 earlier this week.

Babe Ruth 14s

With the game scoreless after four innings, Worcester South Side scored two runs in the top of the fifth inning and four more in the sixth.

Pittsfield's Shane Perrault led off the home sixth with a base hit. After an error, Dan Walter lined a two-run double, cutting the lead to 6-2.

Following two more runs by South Side in the top of the seventh inning, Pittsfield made two quick outs, but three consecutive walks loaded the bases. Mike Bino followed with a shot off the fence to plate two and Walter hit an infield single, making it 8-5. But the 14's couldn't push the game-tying run across.

Babe Ruth 15s

Leominster has beaten every opponent in this year's tournament by a mercy rule with a devastating offense. Pittsfield gave them an early scare yesterday by knocking out Leominster's starter after only one inning. Steve Papa's RBI single plated Brad Shove with a run to tie the game 1-1. Pittsfield had loaded the bases in the first, but only got the one run. Pittsfield tied the score after Eric Kistler's first-inning home run.

Reliever Kevin Barnaby quieted Pittsfield, giving up an unearned run on one hit in the final four innings. John Phelps had Pittsfield's only hit in the last four innings.

Leominster retaliated by scoring five runs in the third inning, three in the fourth and four in the fifth to end the contest.

Pittsfield, N. Adams win in Ruth tourneys

Eagle Staff Reports

The Adams' 15-year-old all star team sent Pittsfield into the loser's bracket in the Berkshire County Babe Ruth age 15 tournament with a victory on Wednesday. Last night, Pittsfield turned back around and beat South Berkshire to get another shot at Adams.

This time, the Berkshire County title will be on the line.

Brad Shove pitched a complete game seven-hitter to lead Pittsfield to a 4-2 win over South Berkshire in the loser's bracket final at Pinegrove Park.

Pittsfield and Adams will meet at 1 today for the title. Should Pittsfield win that game, an if game will be played following the completion of the first game.

In the 14-year-old tournament at Balandini Field in Adams, North Adams scored early and often to defeat Dalton 13-8.

North Adams will play Pittsfield at 1 p.m. today in the finals. Should North Adams win, a deciding game will be played following the first game.

Pittsfield 4, S. Berkshire 2

DALTON — Pittsfield had sent South Berkshire into the loser's bracket when it beat them in the first round. Last night, they sent them packing from the tournament.

After leaving runners on base in each of the first two innings, Pittsfield hit the scoreboard in the top of the third.

With one out, Josh Stoklosa singled and stole second. Shove followed with a base hit to break the shutout.

Pittsfield added two more runs in the fourth on an RBI double by Steve Papa and an RBI single by Dan Seseke.

Wes Filkins' RBI single in the bottom of the inning made it 3-1, but Pittsfield got that run back when Seseke drove in another run in the sixth.

South Berkshire had a chance to make things interesting in the sixth when they put runners on first and third with two outs. Filkins followed with a base hit to left that scored one run, but a perfect relay throw from John Phelps to catcher Stoklosa cut down the

other runner trying to score.

Pat Negrini went the distance for South Berkshire, allowing eight hits and striking out three.

North Adams 13, Dalton 8

ADAMS — North Adams scored 11 runs in its first three at bats and held Dalton off to advance to today's final.

Casey Cook and Mike Wood had RBI singles and Kyle Jolin a two-run double in a five-run first inning for North Adams. Wood and Cook added RBI singles in a three-run second.

North Adams also scored three times in the third on a two-run triple by Wood and another single by Cook.

John Ferris and Kevin Majchrowski each had two hits and drove in a run for Dalton.

Tim Micelli pitched five innings of four-hit baseball in relief of Wood to get the win.

North Little League tryouts scheduled

Tryouts for the North Little League will be held this weekend at the Brown Street Field, on Springside Ave. On Saturday, tryouts for 9-year olds will be at 10 a.m., with tryouts for 10, 11 and 12-year olds at 11 a.m. Tryouts on Sunday will be at noon and 1 p.m. Anyone who has not registered may do so on Saturday. Information: Pat Hogan, 443-3787.

3/29/00

Pittsfield Little League signups begin

Registration for the Pittsfield Little League program will take place on Saturday from 10 a.m. until noon, on Monday, from 6-8 p.m. and on Wednesday from 6-8 p.m.

South Little League registration will take place at the Holmes Road fire station, North Little League registration will take place at the Pecks Road fire station, while West Little League registration will be held at the West Housatonic Street fire station.

Birth certificates must be presented at registration.

To find out league boundaries or other information, contact the Pittsfield Parks Department, 499-9343.

3/23/00

Little League candy sale is Saturday

The Pittsfield Little Leagues will be holding the annual candy sale fund raiser on Saturday from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Players from the three city Little Leagues will be going door-to-door for the sale.

The Berkshire Eagle, Friday, June 16, 2000

Local Little League players in skills event at Fenway

PITTSFIELD — Two Pittsfield South Little League players will get a chance tomorrow to compete for a trip to this year's All-Star baseball game in Atlanta.

David Glass, 12, a student at St. Mark's Middle School and a member of the City Savings Bank team and Tim Snyder, 10, a player for the Italian-American Club and a student at Egremont Elementary School will take the field at Fenway Park before tomorrow's scheduled game against the Toronto Blue Jays in the third round of the Major League Baseball-sponsored Diamond Skills Competition.

The two city athletes competed first locally at Deming Field and then again in Westfield to advance to tomorrow's competition at Fenway. At the same time the third round is taking place in Boston, other major-league cities will also be holding similar competitions.

The top four finishers in each of four age divisions will get to compete for national honors at the All-Star Game in Atlanta in July. Categories include batting, fielding and base running.

Players involved in tomorrow's event at Fenway will be introduced before the game about noon.

Pittsfield South, Lee pull out thrilling wins in L.L. tourney

Eagle Staff Reports

PITTSFIELD — Pittsfield South pulled out a thriller yesterday in Berkshire County Little League tournament play at the Pittsfield West field.

The South squad defeated a spunky Great Barrington team 6-5. South led 6-2 late, but needed to withstand a three-run rally in the home fifth by the Barrington team.

At the Pittsfield North field, it was another thriller that played out.

Lee scored three times in its final time at the plate to edge Williamstown 8-7. Jonathan Rice had four hits and three RBIs for the winners.

P-South 6, Great Barrington 5

Pat Blanchard and Steve Andematten led off the Barrington sixth with back-to-back singles. South reliever Adam Simeone struck out one hitter and then got a grounder to third baseman David Glass, who stepped on the

bag at the hot corner and threw to first to complete the double play and end the game.

South led 3-2 after four frames, but added to that in the fifth when Joey Flynn drilled a long round-tripper with two teammates aboard. Flynn, who had a sacrifice fly in the first, finished with four RBIs.

Dan Haddad pitched into the fourth inning to get the victory. He struck out seven. Jeff Fields worked the middle frames before giving way to Simeone.

Fields had two hits for South while Haddad had a double.

Adam Zamberletti went the distance for Barrington, allowing seven hits. Barrington had two hits from Andematten.

Pittsfield led 3-0 after two innings, but Barrington bounced back with a pair of runs in the third.

Rice pitched five innings with Benjamin Simon getting the win in relief by pitching the sixth.

Seth George went the distance for Williamstown.

7/13/00

Pittsfield teams remain alive in L.L. tournament

Eagle Staff Reports

PITTSFIELD — Pittsfield West and Pittsfield North stayed alive in the Berkshire County Little League tournament last night. For Sheffield and North Adams, it's wait till next year.

Justin Rivelli struck out 10 and tossed a one-hitter to lead Pittsfield North past North Adams, 1-0, in a game played at the Pittsfield North field.

Pittsfield West, meanwhile, had a pair of seven-run innings en route to a 15-3 triumph over Sheffield in a game played at the Pittsfield West field.

Ryan Foss relieved Sheffield starter Cody Kern in the first and pitched well through the fourth, giving up just one run in that span. But West bounced back for seven more runs in the fifth.

Kevin Quadrozzi and Dempsey Quinn each had two-run doubles in the inning.

Ryan Rapkowicz finished with three hits and three RBIs. Quinn and Bushey each had two hits.

That was all the North team would get against Bopp, who finished with nine strikeouts. He

allowed four hits and didn't walk a batter.

Rivelli, Todd Bolotin and Paul Procopio had the other North hits while Mike Pitt had the lone single for North Adams with two outs in the sixth.

Pittsfield West 15, Sheffield 3

Tim Loehr and T.J. Bowler each had a double and a single in the seven-run first inning for the West. Anthony Ringie and Devon Bushey contributed doubles to the rally.

Ryan Foss relieved Sheffield starter Cody Kern in the first and pitched well through the fourth, giving up just one run in that span. But West bounced back for seven more runs in the fifth.

Kevin Quadrozzi and Dempsey Quinn each had two-run doubles in the inning.

Clayton Pierce reached on a bunt single and moved to third base on two infield outs. Pierce then scampered home on a wild pitch.

That was all the North team would get against Bopp, who finished with nine strikeouts. He

Pittsfield South is in Little League title game

Will play winner of tonight's Dalton-Lee game

Eagle Staff Reports

PITTSFIELD — One finalist has been determined for the Berkshire County Little League championship.

Pittsfield South remained perfect in tournament play, defeating Lee 12-1 yesterday at Pittsfield West field. David Glass pitched four shutout innings, giving up a lone run in the fifth on Justin Lovato's home run. The game was stopped after five

Pittsfield West, beginning at 5:30 p.m. That's because Dalton-Hinsdale scored three runs in the top of the sixth inning to defeat Pittsfield North 9-8.

Pittsfield South 12, Lee 1

Joey Flynn's three-run home run in the top of the first inning gave Glass all the run support he would need. Glass pitched four shutout innings, giving up a lone run in the fifth on Justin Lovato's home run. The game was stopped after five

7/19/00 LITTLE, continued on C3

Little from C1

innings because of the 10-run rule.

Pittsfield South broke open the game with five runs in the top of the second. Joe Bastow had a double and a triple for Pittsfield South while Brendan Burke added two hits. Tyler Perry took the loss for Lee.

Dalton 9, Pittsfield North 8

Mitch Lewis had a two-run homer in the third inning and Anthony Allegrone hit a three-run

home run in the sixth to bring back Dalton-Hinsdale after they fell behind by three runs entering the last two frames.

After Allegrone's smash tied the game in the sixth, he again came up in the final inning following a double by Tony Marcella. Allegrone's base hit scored Marcella for the game-winning run.

North had built a big lead in the fifth inning, scoring seven runs. Singles by Adam Hunt, Kevin Robinson, and Paul Procopio provided the damage.

7/19/00

Pittsfield South takes care of Westfield North

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

WESTFIELD — Joey Bastow and David Glass are about as different in character as anyone would find in Little Leaguers. While the two might indeed be different, last night they shared a common goal — leading their team to another win.

The energetic and carefree Bastow went 2-for-4 and drove in two runs while the focused Glass tossed a four-hit shutout and struck out seven to lead District 1 Little League champion Pittsfield South to a 5-0 win over District 2 champion Westfield North at the Paper Mill Field.

With the win, Pittsfield advances in the double-elimination tournament, and will play tonight at 7:30 in Leominster against the winner of last night's game between the District 3 and 4 champions.

"Joey and David might show their emotions different, but they both come to play," said South manager Joe Skutnik. "This whole group has to be one of the loosest groups I've ever been around.

"Today, I honestly didn't think we were ready. During our warmups, nobody was talking or anything. They have a way of getting ready when the time comes, and they did that again today," Skutnik con-

SOUTH, continued on C3

South from C1

tinued. "We're looking forward to going to Leominster. That 7:30 game is going to be a killer because that will make for a long day for our kids. Hopefully we can win and get a day off."

South strikes first

South wasted little time in getting on the board. Glass ripped the first pitch of the game from Westfield North hurler Justin Labarie into the right-centerfield gap for a double. One out later, Bastow sent a rocket back up the middle for a single to score Glass.

"I knew when David got to second that I was going to knock him in," said Bastow, who has been on a tear the entire tournament. "Their pitcher wasn't throwing all that hard, and he was putting them right down the middle."

Westfield came right back and mounted a threat in the bottom of the frame. John Moren led off with a base hit to left off Glass, and Grant Gibree walked. But Glass bore down and got Justin

Benson on a pop up and struck out Greg Fanion. Moren was then thrown out trying to steal third to end the inning.

"At this point, I figure we need to score at least four runs in every game, because the 16 teams that are left are all going to be good-hitting clubs," said Coach Skutnik. "Until we scored those three runs, I still had a lot of doubt in my mind."

Westfield North did threaten in the sixth. Gibree drew a walk to open the inning. Benson bounced into a fielder's choice the retired Gibree for the first out, but Glass then walked Greg Fanion. South got a break when Joe Karetta's ground ball hit Benson in the back of the foot for the second out. Pinch-hitter Nick Fiorini then struck out to end the game.

Glass settled down after the first inning, and retired eight in a row before Gibree singled to lead off the fourth. Westfield North had another shot to get on the board in the fifth when they had runners on second and third with two outs, but Glass retired Moren on a ground out to end the inning.

Pittsfield iced the game with three more runs in the sixth. Nick Bianchi and Tim Burns walked to open the inning. Kris McLaughlin then dropped a bunt, and both Bianchi and Burns came in to score when the throw to third

Pittsfield South wins age 11 All-Star tourney

PITTSFIELD — Pittsfield South finished with a 5-0 record to win the South 11-year old Little League All-Star baseball tournament. South defeated Pittsfield West 6-1 in the title game.

For Pittsfield South, Max Krakowiai had two hits and a RBI, while Scott Jamula, Chris Bianchi and Steve Demastri each had a hit and an RBI. For Pittsfield West, Dustin Baabs had a single and the lone RBI.

Pittsfield West was 3-2 in the tournament, while Pittsfield

North was 2-3 and Adams was 0-5.

Jimmy Fund Tourney

In the Berkshire County age 10 Jimmy Fund Tournament, Great Barrington defeated Dalton-Hinsdale 7-2.

Danny Passetto had a triple and two RBIs for the winners and teammate Dominic Scapin added a single and two RBIs. Adam Ringler was the winning pitcher. For Dalton-Hinsdale, Brian Dolan was the losing pitcher. Ryan Boino hit a triple and Ryan Dolan added a double.



Berkshire County champions

The Pittsfield South Little League all-stars won this year's Berkshire County (District 1) title and begin state tournament play tonight in Westfield. Members of the team include, from left, FRONT ROW — Nick Bianchi, Jeff Fields, Dan Murphy, John Skutnik and Chad Brown. MIDDLE ROW — Brian Barber, Adam Simeone, Tim Burns, Brendan Burke and Kris McLaughlin. BACK ROW — Assistant coach Jerry Burke, manager Joe Skutnik, Dan Haddad, Dave Glass, Joe Bastow, assistant coach Jim Fields, Joe Flynn and assistant coach Ty Perrault.

Tom Ryan / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Wednesday, July 26, 2000

A big victory

Pittsfield South advances in Little League tournament

Eagle Staff Report

LEOMINSTER — Pittsfield knew what was on the line — and did what it had to. The beneficiary of three double plays, Dan Haddad pitched a complete-game, five-hitter to lead District 1 Little League Champion Pittsfield South to a 4-2 victory over Fitchburg West in Leominster last night. Pittsfield South will now play for the Section 1 Championship Saturday in Holden. The time and matchup is still

SOUTH, continued on C3

South from C1

to be determined. *7/26/00*
Haddad gave up two runs while striking out five and walking just two. Ryan Touchette suffered the loss for Fitchburg.

"Dan struggled a bit with his control, going to a lot of 3-2 counts," said Pittsfield manager Joe Skutnik. "But he settled down and the guys played sound defense behind him."

Double plays in the second, third, and fifth innings that might have been detrimental to Pittsfield South's championship-game hopes. But the Pittsfield South defense did what it needed to do.

"The double plays were just huge," said Skutnik. "Everybody played exceptional games defensively."

Pittsfield scored all that they would need in the initial two frames. Chad Brown walked to open the home first inning, Joey Bastow singled and Joe Flynn reached on a fielder's choice, fore-

ing Brown at third. Tim Burns then ripped a two-run double.

Pittsfield South's Adam Simeone and Brendan Burke got back-to-back walks to lead off the bottom of the second inning. One out later, Brown crushed a drive to the gap in left for a two-run single. That made the score 4-0.

Joe Gonzales laced a double to center to begin the top of the fifth frame for Fitchburg. Following a Mike Brissette walk and a wild pitch, Ryan Touchette hit a sacrifice fly to right for the team's first run. The ensuing batter followed with a deep drive to left field, but Kris McLaughlin made a diving catch for the out. McLaughlin then threw to second and doubled up Brissette for the third double play of the game.

Later in the fifth, Josh Cassells reached on an error and eventually crossed the plate when Jeff Maguy lined a double to right. Second baseman Burke took rightfielder Jeff Fields' throw and tossed a strike to Bastow at third to get Maguy.

Pittsfield North wins

PITTSFIELD — With the game knotted at three entering the top of the seventh inning, Pittsfield North struck for five runs to down Dalton 8-3 in the Berkshire County Age 10 Jimmy Fund Little League Tournament held at the North Little League Field in Pittsfield.

John Lobelette pitched the final two innings for the victory. Kelly Grogan suffered the loss for Dalton, pitching the final stanza.

Lance King led off the top of the seventh with a single to start the rally. Following two free passes, Lobelette smacked a base hit to score two and Scott Simonelli added two more with another single. Joe Yon rounded out the scoring with a base knock to plate Simonelli.

Following an RBI single by Ken Bilideau in the first inning, North tallied two runs in the second.

Thursday, August 10, 2000

South plays tonight against Old Lyme

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

BRISTOL, Conn. — The Pittsfield South All-Stars took yesterday off. But tonight at 8 the Little Red Machine will put itself in gear again.

After a thrilling 2-0 win over Lincoln, R.I. on Tuesday in the opening game of the Eastern Regional Little League Tournament being played at the Giamatti Center's Breen Field, the South squad will face Connecticut champion Old Lyme in the second of five games to be played as part of the opening-round portion of the tournament.

Connecticut opened with a 9-4 win over Vermont on Tuesday and defeated New Hampshire last night. "[Tonight's game] will be huge," said South manager Joe Skutnik, whose team spent the day yesterday tour-

ing ESPN studios and visiting Lake Compounce Amusement Park. "This game should be in front of a very big crowd. Old Lyme's a local team and that should bring people out to the game."

"I also think we will have a good group of Pittsfield people that will make the trip as well."

South will send right-hander Dan Haddad to the mound. It was Haddad that pitched Pittsfield into the regional tournament when he defeated East Lynn, 5-0, on Saturday to capture the state title.

"Dan's well rested," Skutnik said.

Old Lyme is making its first visit to the Eastern Regionals. In its win over Brattleboro, Vt. on Monday, Old Lyme exploded for seven runs in the fifth inning.

David Quintin, who homered earlier in the game, had an RBI single in the inning as did Robby Neaton. Neaton's twin brother Michael added an RBI double and

Brett Meehan had a two-run double.

"They can hit, but now that I've seen all the teams in our pool, I really think we can play with all of them," said Skutnik. "They used one pitcher for four innings, then had two other kids finish."

"It might be a real benefit that we're not playing until the last game of the day. The kids will have all day to focus and relax."

TOURNAMENT NOTEBOOK: South is making their first appearance in the regionals since 1976. One more win for South will make it the first time a team from Pittsfield has won as many as two games in the regionals. The last Pittsfield team to play in the regionals was Pittsfield North in 1994.

South's game tonight will be the first of four games in

SOUTH, continued on C3

South from C1

as many days. Tomorrow, South takes on Auburn Suburban of Maine at 5:30 p.m. The city team then gets Brattleboro, Vt. on Saturday night at 8. Pittsfield will wrap up pool play on Sunday at 12:30 p.m. when it takes on New Hampshire champion Goffstown.

Auburn Suburban is making its second trip to the regionals, the last being in 1997. They lost their first game in district play, but have rebounded with 10 wins in a row.

Brattleboro appeared here two years ago, as well as 1993. The Vermont state team has come from behind in seven of its nine tournament wins, including their last two games in the state tournament against Shelburne.

Goffstown is making its second appearance in the past three years, having also won the state title in 1998. Goffstown opened play yesterday and beat Brattleboro 2-0 behind the one-hit pitching of Josh Gregory. They scored single runs in the first on a sacrifice fly by Darren McLean and added an unearned run in the sixth.

P-South takes county Little League crown

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

ADAMS — For the first time in the history of the Berkshire County Little League tournament, the championship game was played under the lights.

But Pittsfield South's Dan Haddad may not remember what time of the day it was. He'll only remember that he pitched a pretty darn good game.

Haddad pitched a one-hitter and struck out 10 and South used the long ball to score four times in the bottom of the third on the way to a 12-2 victory over Dalton-Hinsdale at Beaver Bard Field.

The game was held up 25 minutes by a

power outage in the top of the fifth inning.

Pittsfield South now advances to the next round of state tournament play, a double-elimination event that features the 16 district champions in the commonwealth.

Pittsfield will play at Westfield North on Monday at 5:30. If Pittsfield wins, then it would play at Leominster on Tuesday. It has not been determined yet where Pittsfield would play if the team should lose on Monday.

"I was little worried at the start,

SOUTH, continued on C3



Shannon DeCelle / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Pittsfield South's Dan Murphy takes a swing during batting practice yesterday at the Amsler Campus Center on the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts campus. Pittsfield South continues its quest for the state Little League championship today.

Pittsfield South hits the road, continuing quest for crown

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The road to the state Little League finals will continue for the Pittsfield South All-Stars on Saturday when they play the winner of tonight's loser's bracket game between Fitchburg West/Jesse Burkett of Worcester game at 1 p.m. in Holden.

Should Pittsfield fall, a second and deciding game will be played at 4 p.m.

With a win, South will advance to the state tournament, which begins on Wednesday in Beverly. The double-elimination tournament will conclude with the championship game on Aug. 5.

"Just to get here, we had to win five games in a row. These 13 kids have been told that every year Dalton goes two and out. We had two goals: one to get this far, and the second was to win it."

"We had to play seven games to get here, and I think it caught up with us tonight," said Dalton coach Dustin Belcher.

"Just to get here, we had to win five games in a row. These 13 kids have been told that every year Dalton goes two and out. We had two goals: one to get this far, and the second was to win it."

"We didn't accomplish both, but just to get here took a great effort on the part of every player."

"I was a bit concerned that the delay would hurt us, but Dan stayed with it and pitched a great game," said Skutnik. "His first time out, he was a bit nervous and struggled with his control. Today, he was just great."

Each and every one of the members of the county champions know that three wins and 18 innings of baseball is all that stands between them and more traveling.

South, which has gone unbeaten in six games, begins its quest for a state title at 5 p.m. today when they face Section 2 and defending state champion Middleboro. In the other opening night game, Dedham will play East Lynn at 7:30 p.m.

"We're going to have some distractions like the kids being with host families instead of home, because that will be new experience for most of them, and that might be our biggest hurdle," said Pittsfield manager Joe Skutnik, whose team has spent the past two days working out at the Campus Center at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts. "I'm not sure how that will work, but we'll try and do our best. It's all going to come down to who makes the right adjustments. We've been able to do that several times so far. We just need to keep doing it."

Action will continue again tomorrow with the first night loser's playing at 5:00 p.m. and the winner's bracket game at 7:30. The final is slated for Saturday at 4, with an "if" game to follow if needed. The state champion will advance to the Eastern Regional in New Britain, Conn. beginning next Tuesday.

8/2/00

SOUTH, continued on C3

South from C1

because they shut us down in the first inning, and nobody's been able to do that to us yet," said South coach Joe Skutnik. "Ryan Ricci threw a great game for them, and he was the hardest throwing kids we've seen yet."

Dalton had won five in a row since we beat them, and that is quite an accomplishment. You've got to give them a lot of credit. I'm proud of our kids, though. Many of them have been playing ball together for quite some time now, and have come up together. They worked hard to win this."

Pittsfield South, which last won the county title in 1994, came into the game with history already on its side. The Deming Field-based all-stars have won titles in the first year of each of the last two decades.

Last night, the team opened another decade and a new millennium with yet another county crown.

South scored an unearned run in the second frame. But took off in the third.

Big third inning

With one out, David Glass took a fastball from Ricci and sent it over the fence in right.

Ricci retired the next hitter, but Joe Bastow followed with another round-tripper over the fence in left.

Joey Flynn drew a walk and went to third on a double by Tim Burns. Dan Murphy then doubled home both runners for a 5-0 lead.

"We've probably got six kids who are capable of hitting the ball out of the park," said Skutnik.

Dalton/Hinsdale, which entered

Comments

South suffers 3-2 tourney loss to Old Lyme

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

BRISTOL, Conn. — It was a chance to secure a berth in next week's one-and-out elimination round of the Little League Eastern Regionals.

And it was Old Lyme which seized that opportunity with a thrilling 3-2 win over Pittsfield South last night before some 2,000 fans at Breen Field. Some 500 supports from Pittsfield were at the game.

Mike Neaton pitched a six-hitter and struck out 10 to beat South's Dan Haddad in a classic pitcher's duel.

"What a great game, and what a great atmosphere for these kids," said South manager Joe Skutnik. "I think out kids were pumped up, and there were times when we needed to settle down and we didn't do it. We still have to win a couple more, but I really think we'll see Old Lyme again before this tournament is over."

South will return to action today at 5:30 when they play Auburn Suburban of Maine.

David Glass opened the game by lining a shot off Neaton's glove for a single. Brendan Burke then hit into a fielder's choice that retired Glass. Burke went to second on a wild pitch and over to third on a base hit by Haddad.

Joey Flynn, making his first start in four games, followed with a base hit up the middle to score Burke. After a visit from Old Lyme manager Brad Moore, Neaton fanned the next two hitters to close out the inning trailing by a single run.

"We came out swinging and got that one run, but I would like to have scored at least one more," said Skutnik. "Their manager did a great job of coming out and settling his kid down. That was a big point."

"I thought that was the turning point in the game," said Moore. "They came out and were ripping the ball all over the place. They had one run in and runners on, but Mike pitched out of it. That was very, very big."

Old Lyme came back and took the lead in the second. With one out, Dan Harrigan walked and went to second on a base hit by Dave

Quintin. Both runners then moved up a base on a wild pitch, and Harrigan came in to score when catcher Burke's belated throw sailed into left field. Quintin then scored on a sacrifice bunt by Conner Zito.

Old Lyme added another run in the third when Dave Harrigan was hit by pitch. Quintin then dropped a sacrifice bunt to get Harrigan to second. Harrigan went to third on a wild pitch and scored on a safety squeeze by pinch-hitter Conner Vincheshi.

"That's a great team, and their kid was really shutting us down, so we did what we had to do to score some runs," said Moore. "Executing those bunts was what we had to do to get on the board, and we're not afraid to do that if we have to."

"On the first bunt, we didn't know what we were suppose to, but we did on the second and the kid just beat the throw home," said Skutnik. "We made a few mistakes, but I think we'll bounce back. As long as we execute it right, it doesn't bother me."

SOUTH, continued on C3

South from C1

After Haddad pitched out of a bases-loaded jam in the fifth, Pittsfield made it interesting in the sixth. Haddad opened the inning with a double and went to third on a ground out. With two outs, Chad Brown blooped a single into left to score Haddad.

Brown went to second on a wild pitch, bringing Joe Bastow to the plate and the Pittsfield fans to their feet. After fouling off four

straight pitches, Bastow lifted a line drive into right field that appeared to headed for the gap.

But Old Lyme outfielder Austin Ricker threw up his glove just before he slipped on the wet grass, and gloved the ball for the final out. Haddad finished with a two-hitter and struck out nine.

"I'm proud of the way we batted, and kept fighting," said Skutnik. "Like East Lynn, I think we know we can play with them now. I expect to play them again."

8/11/00

Pittsfield South CD claims title

By Adam Valachovic
Eagle Correspondent

PITTSEFIELD — Remaining perfect in the course of a season is almost impossible. Pittsfield South CD proved that theory wrong.

Daniel Bernardo had two hits and drove in two and reliever Andrew Dorr pitched three innings of one-hit ball to lead Pittsfield South CD past Pittsfield West White 11-2 in the Berkshire County Jimmy Fund Age 9-10 Little League tournament championship game yesterday at Deming Field.

A perfect tourney

With the win, Pittsfield South ended the tournament at 4-0. This was the second consecutive tournament title for the squad, which won five straight in winning the Great Barrington Tournament.

Bernardo and Dorr combined to allow just two runs over six innings, walking one and striking out eight. Bernardo picked up the vic-

tory while starter Bryan Bettters suffered the loss for Pittsfield West White.

"This is really a special group of kids, but all the players in the league are great as well," said Pittsfield South head coach Tim Snyder. "There are eight teams and everyone cheers for each other."

"These kids just make coaching a fun."

After scoring an unearned run in the first inning, Pittsfield South struck for two in the home second. Following a Trevor Pemble single, Bernardo lined an RBI double to the wall in left. Bernardo then scored on an errant throw by catcher Jacob Rand to first base on ensuing batter Dorr's grounder to put Pittsfield South up 3-0.

Pittsfield West rallied for two in the top of the third inning. Consecutive singles by John Fox and Travis Carlson put runners on the corners for Bettters. He placed a single just between the left and rightfielders for a deep two-run single. That made it 3-2.

Pittsfield South then put the game away

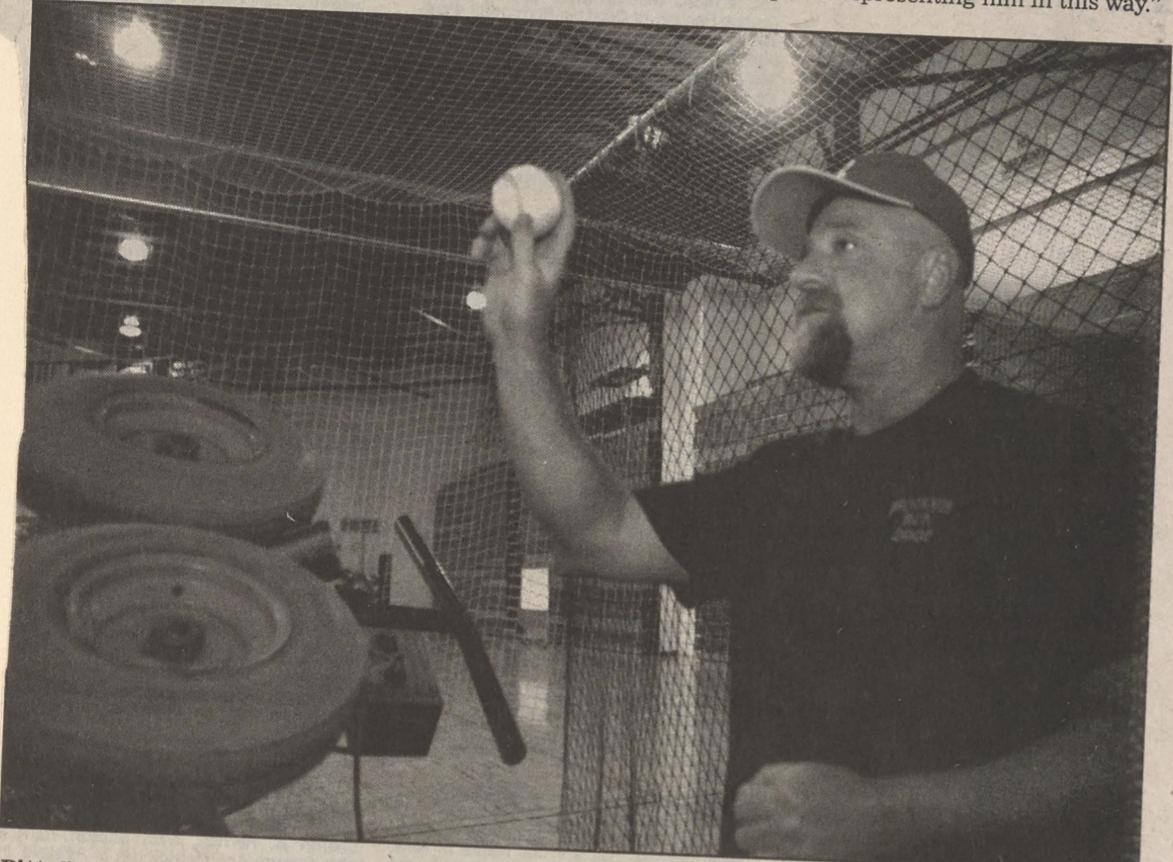
in the bottom of the third inning as they batted around to score four runs on three hits, three walks and one error.

With two men aboard and one out, Jacob Barbour lined an RBI single. Following a strikeout, Jacob Ryan reached on an error, scoring two more runs and sending Ryan to third. Bernardo followed with a base hit to left for the final run of the inning and a 7-2 advantage.

Tim Snyder pushed another run across on a sacrifice fly in the home fourth and Pittsfield South added three more on a Pemble one-run single and a two-RBI base knock by Cody Civello in the bottom of the fifth.

The tournament is a fundraiser for the Jimmy Fund, and memories of the past could still be felt at center stage.

"We were playing in honor of Connor Dillon, who passed away due to cancer" said coach Snyder, referring to the "CD" patches on his players uniforms. "The players all knew that, and felt proud representing him in this way."



Pittsfield South coach Jerry Burke loads the pitching machine during a workout for the Little League team yesterday at Massachusetts College. Shannon DeCelle / Berkshire Eagle Staff

South from C1

Oddly enough, the last time a Pittsfield South team advanced to the state tournament, the opponent was Middleboro. Middleboro won that game and ended up going all the way to Williamsport, Pa. for the Little League World Series.

"They've got a very solid program down there, and one that is regarded very highly," said Skutnik, who had the opportunity to see Middleboro play in the Section 2 final on Sunday. "I still think we can play with them though."

Middleboro won the title by beating Shrewsbury 1-0 in the if game after Shrewsbury beaten them by the same score in the first game. Kyle Lortie pitched a one-hitter and struck out 12. The Section 2 champions scored their only run in the fourth when Dan Miller walked and later scored on an error. In the two games though, they had four hits.

"I wasn't too impressed by their hitting, and I think the pitching we have is better than any they saw last weekend," said Skutnik, who will hand the ball to ace David Glass. "I think they'll have to do a lot of bunting to try and score runs."

With that in mind, the South infield of first basemen Dan

Haddad and Adam Simeone, second basemen Jeff Fields and Tim Burns, shortstop Chad Brown and third baseman Joe Bastow spent a considerable part of Monday's practice going over different situations.

"We've had fun up to this point, but I think it's going to be even better now," said Brown, whose brother Ryan was a member of the 1994 South team. "I think for us, the big thing was just winning District 1. We just have to keep playing the way we have been. That's the key."

Glass has been virtually un-hittable in the state run, and tossed a four-hitter and fanned seven in South's 3-1 win over Jesse Burkett of Worcester on Saturday.

In 24 innings of work, Glass has allowed just four earned runs and struck out 34. Haddad has been equally tough in his last two starts, and allowed just five hits in beating Fitchburg West a week ago.

"We could go with Danny and I'd be just as confident," said Skutnik. "David bounces back a little quicker than Dan though, and by starting him it would allow him to be able to go for at least a couple of innings on Saturday.

Because the other sectionals were all backed up by rain, I'd be surprised if any team is going to have a pitcher that will have had as much rest as Danny. That is going

to be a factor."

Win or lose, Haddad knows he's going to get the ball tomorrow. He can't wait.

"The way we've been playing, it's been a lot easier pitching," said Haddad. "I know these teams are going to be able to hit, but even if I do give a home run or something, I know we can get it back. I don't know I needed the rest or not, but I'm ready." Glass or Haddad have pitched all but three innings in the tournament, and faced with the possibility of playing as many as five games in three days, Skutnik has had others throw as well.

"Jeff Fields, Joe Flynn, and Brendan Burke have all been throwing on the side, and they know that chances are good that at some point, they might be on the mound. All of them can throw two pitches for strikes. I'm confident they'll be ready," said coach Skutnik.

Flynn, Burns and Dan Murphy will start in the outfield. Brian Barber, Kris McLaughlin, Nick Bianchi and John Skutnik will also see action.

Directions to Harry Ball Field

Take Mass Pike East to Route 128 North. Follow 128 North to Exit 18. Take left off ramp and follow 1/8 mile. Harry Ball Field in Beverly will be on your left hand side.

P-South wins state opener

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

Middleboro but tossed an errant throw to first on a comeback grounder by Dan Murphy. That plated two more runs.

Burns, who advanced all the way to third base on the play, made it 4-0 when he came on Jeff Fields' sacrifice fly.

"I know our pitcher's haven't had much rest lately, but I think it was more a case of nerves with the walks," said Perecini after the game. "Pittsfield is good, but I really think we could have won this game. Even when we were down by six, I thought we could come back."

Insurance runs

South added two more runs in the second with some aggressive running. With one out, Brown walked and went to second on a wild pitch. Flynn followed with an infield hit that sent Brown to third. On the next pitch, Flynn broke for second, but the throw was off line and Brown scored. Flynn also came all the way around to score when the ball was thrown away.

Glass, meanwhile, stayed in control. He handcuffed the Middleboro lineup, and at one point retired 10 in a row and 13 of 14 from the second through the fifth inning. Glass, who had three of Pittsfield's four hits, struck out the side in the sixth.

"David threw as well as he has this entire tournament," said Skutnik. "We made the plays behind him too, especially the one Chad made."

Brown went deep in the hole in the second inning to backhand a grounder hit by Trevor Cleveland and fired to first, where Dan Haddad pulled the throw out of the dirt for the out.

Despite having only three days of rest since his last start, Glass said he felt ready.

"My arm didn't feel too bad at all, in fact it felt pretty good," said Glass, who also doubled off the fence and scored in

8/3/00
SOUTH, continued on C3

South from C1

the third. "Getting those four runs in the first was good, because then I knew I could give up a few and it wouldn't hurt us. I just wish one of those two I hit off the fence had gone out. That would've been pretty sweet."

Added Skutnik: "I think the only thing we had to worry about was that we'd stop being aggressive when we got that big lead," said Skutnik. "Between innings, I challenged them a bit to keep playing as hard, or even harder, then they were. They certainly responded."

8/3/00



Some 1,700 youngsters age 9 and under swarmed over Clapp Park hill on April 14, 1968, scrambling for 3,500 eggs filled with jelly beans by Exchange Club members. The sunny, warm weather at the time helped make it one of the most successful Easter egg hunts in years.

4/14/68

PITTSFIELD: The winners of the Easter Egg Hunt held Saturday, April 22, at the Boys' and Girls' Club are as follows:

Ages 2 and 3: Austin Benlien, Roma Sabino, Ashlyn Barcz, Mitchell Clary and Trista Castegnary.

Ages 4 and 5: Brittany Alderman, Scott Bamba, Elizabeth Suriner, Lewis Ely and Tommy Dezes.

Ages 6 and 7: Lauren Dewey, Robbie Russell, Gerald Glover, Brian Berry and James Johnson.

Ages 8 and 9: David DiNicola, Hannah Plager, Robbie Farron, Chris Doyle and Maggie Pytko.

Pittsfield to host Easter egg hunt

PITTSFIELD — The annual Easter egg hunt co-sponsored by the Boys & Girls Club and the Parks and Recreation Department will be held Saturday at the Pittsfield Boys & Girls Club on Melville Street.

The event is open to Pittsfield children only and is arranged in four age groups: 2 and 3-year-olds at 1; 4 and 5-year-olds at 1:30; 6 and 7-year-olds at 2, and 8 and 9-year-olds at 2:30.

Prizes will be awarded in each age group for children finding the purple, yellow, blue, green and orange eggs. Children are asked to bring their own bags or baskets.

Information: Department of Parks & Recreation at 499-9343.

Wild Acres fishing derby lures 414

By Ted Giddings

Special to The Eagle

PITTSFIELD — Derby Day was last Saturday in Louisville, Ky., but in Pittsfield, it was Saturday and Sunday at Wild Acres Pond off South Mountain Road.

Under sunny skies, the annual fishing derby sponsored by the Friends of Wild Acres and the city's Recreation Department attracted 414 youngsters (237 boys, 171 girls). Using a variety of baits and lures, ranging from the lowly earthworm and nightcrawler to glittering artificial spinning lures, they caught 442 stocked trout.

Awarded sporting goods for catching tagged trout were Brandon MacDowell, Dan Harrington, Ethan LaPlante, Nicole Cimini, Jennifer Boc, Kaleigh Hayes, Mitchell Meck, Adam Moore, Eric Kozlowski, Jessica Grise, Brittney Wesley and Sara LaFrance.

Winners of raffles of bicycles donated by Wal-Mart were Andrew Senger and A.J. Duclos.

Fred B. Garner Jr., Friends president, said pictures were taken at the derby and may be seen on the Web site at www.BerkshireCommunityKoz.com.

5/11/00

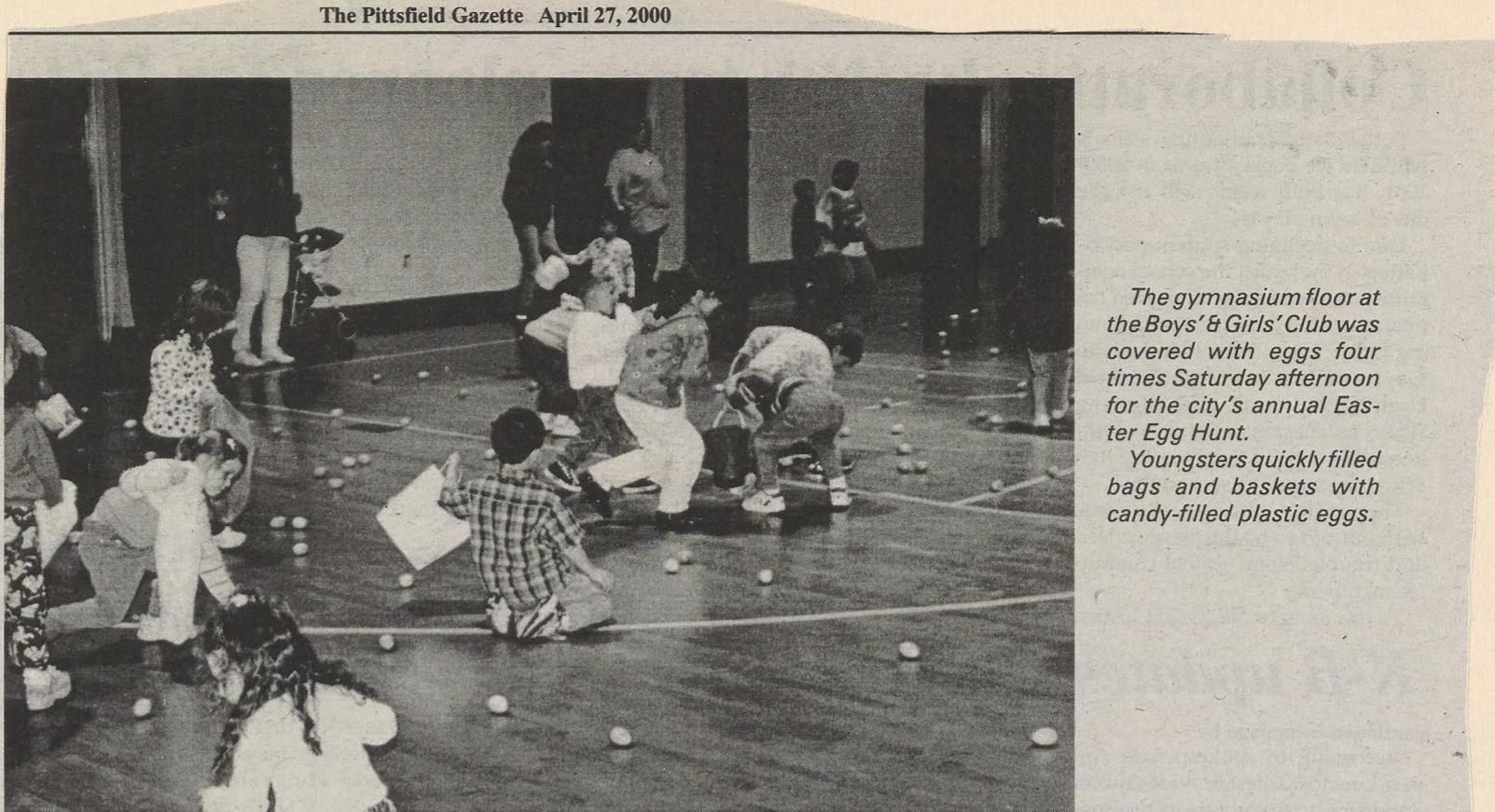
Halloween Parade meeting is Monday

PITTSFIELD — The Department of Community Services' Parks and Recreation Department will be hold its final organizational meeting for the 56th annual Halloween Parade.

The meeting will be held Monday at 7 p.m. at the department office at Springside House, 874 North St. All groups with a unit in the parade must have a representative present at this meeting.

For further information regarding the Halloween Parade: 499-9343.

10/18/00



The gymnasium floor at the Boys' & Girls' Club was covered with eggs four times Saturday afternoon for the city's annual Easter Egg Hunt.

Youngsters quickly filled bags and baskets with candy-filled plastic eggs.

4/27/00

Egg Scramble



The Egg Hunt takes place so rapidly, youngsters' faces express both confusion and excitement.



Athletic form is necessary to gather one's eggs in the heat of competition.

4/27/00



The anticipation of the hunt — fueled by 30 minute breaks between each age group's turn — can be intense.

Meeting scheduled for Halloween Parade

The first organizational meeting for this year's Halloween Parade will take place Wednesday at 7 p.m. at Springside House, 874 North Street.

Local organizations are invited to attend the meeting if they plan to enter a float, band or marching unit.

All entries must have a theme that is Halloween related and any group wishing to participate should have a representative at this meeting.

Groups interested in further information may call the Department of Parks & Recreation at 499-9343.

The 56th annual Halloween Parade will be held on Friday, October 27 at 7 p.m.

In a related item, parks commissioners voted Monday to official proclaim Tuesday, October 31 "trick or treat" night from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

9/21/00

Pittsfield slates trick-or-treating, Halloween Parade

PITTSFIELD — The Board of Park Commissioners has announced that trick-or-treat night will take place on Tuesday, Oct. 31, from 5:30 to 7. Children should be accompanied by an adult.

Also, the Halloween Parade will be held on Friday, Oct. 27, at 7. As in the past, the route will begin at East and First Streets, pass Park Square and proceed to North Street to Wahconah Park.

The Berkshire Eagle, Thursday, October 5, 2000 — B7

Meeting set for Halloween Parade

PITTSFIELD — The Department of Community Services/Parks & Recreation will hold the second organizational meeting for its 56th annual Halloween Parade.

Floats, bands or marching units may still be entered.

The meeting will be held

Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the Springside House, 874 North St. Any group wishing to participate must have a representative present.

For information regarding the parade: the department at 499-9343.

10/12/00

City seeks Park Square Christmas tree

The parks department is asking residents willing to donate an evergreen tree for use as the city's official Christmas tree at Park Square, to call 499-9343 no later than November 3.

Criteria to be used in selecting the Park Square tree will be:

• minimum height of approxi-

mately 30 feet
• superior shape
• ease of access to for cutting
• adequate room to safely fall the tree
• ease of transporting the tree

In cooperation with the city's department of emergency manage-

ment, screening and selection of trees will take place the week of November 6. Cutting and installation of the tree at Park Square is scheduled for the week of November 13 or 20.

Details regarding the date and program for the lighting of the tree will be made available at a later date.

10/12/00

Santa's helpers will make phone calls

Santa volunteers and Santa operators will be making personal telephone calls to Pittsfield children on Monday and Tuesday, from 4:30-7 p.m.

Information sheets about the 19th annual North Pole Calling Program have been sent home with children in kindergarten and Grades 1 & 2.

Forms are available at the Parks Department office at 874 North Street. Forms must be returned by Friday.

Last year, more than 400 children were called by Santa.

12/1/00

Park Square Christmas tree to be lit Dec. 1

PITTSFIELD — The Christmas tree lighting ceremony in Park Square will be held Friday, Dec. 1, at 7 p.m.

The event, sponsored by the Department of Community Services/Parks & Recreation, will include the Eagles Band. Santa will arrive aboard a fire truck driven by James Conant, a member of the Park Commission. Caroling will be led by Paul Nixon.

The 50-foot blue spruce was

donated by Lamar and Laurie Smith and family.

Petricca Construction Co. provided the truck and crane to place the tree in Park Square under the direction of Anthony C. Stracuzzi, park foreman, and his maintenance staff. They were assisted by Thomas Grizley, director of the city's Emergency Management Agency, who, along with his staff, will decorate the tree.

11/25/00

EAGLE - 10/17/2000

Winter Carnival button design contest under way

PITTSFIELD — The 2001 Pittsfield Winter Carnival has begun with its first event, the button design contest.

According to Dave Melle, chairman of the Pittsfield Winter Sports Committee, the contest is open to all students in Pittsfield schools, both public and private. The button design must be related to winter.

Contest applications are available at area schools and at Springside House, 874 North St., from 9 to 4.

The deadline is Nov. 15. Completed applications will be picked up at the schools or may be dropped off at Springside House.

Winners will be chosen in the following grade categories: kindergarten through Grade 2; Grades 3 to 5; Grades 6 to 8, and Grades 9 to 12.

Each winner will receive a \$50 mall certificate. A grand prize

winner will be awarded a \$100 mall certificate and his or her design will be used for the 2001 Winter Carnival button.

Winners will be awarded at the Winter Sports Committee meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 29, at Springside House.

The contest is sponsored by the committee, part of the Department of Community Services, Parks and Recreation.

Buttons will be sold by carnival queen contestants with proceeds going toward carnival events.

They will go on sale Sunday, Jan. 14, 2001.

The button contest chairman is Ron Przedpelski, 443-1617, days or evenings.

For more information: Springside House at 499-9343 or the Winter Carnival Web site at members.aol.com/PWinterCarnival or e-mail to PWinterCarnival@aol.com.



Holiday cheer, along with seasonal chill, filled the air Friday evening during the city's traditional Christmas tree lighting ceremony at Park Square. Following a countdown to the tree lighting, the Eagles Band led a Christmas Carol sing-along. Santa Claus also appeared on the scene, via a city fire truck.

12/17/00

Santa to phone Pittsfield children

Information sheets have been sent home with children in kindergarten and Grades 1 and 2.

Forms are also available at the parks and recreation department office at 874 North St., and must be returned by Friday, Dec. 8.

Last year, more than 400 children were called by Santa.

11/29/00



Floats in the 20-minute parade — such as this entry sponsored by the Sheriff's Office — mixed seasonal spookiness with educational messages.



Costumed marchers represented most of the city's elementary schools.

Halloween Tradition

The 56th annual Halloween Parade slithered through downtown on Friday night.



The Pittsfield High School marching band was one of three musical groups to complete the trek from East Street to Wahconah Park. Unseasonably mild weather pleased marchers and spectators alike.

Lineup announced for Halloween parade

Pittsfield's annual Halloween Parade will step off at 7 p.m. Friday on East Street, proceeding up North Street.

Ten floats and three bands will be featured. The 56th annual event is sponsored by the city's parks department. Cash prizes will be awarded to top floats and the bands.

In addition, 25 children marching in the parade will receive Friendly's restaurant gift certificates for their costumes.

The parade lineup will include, in order:

Pittsfield Police Cruiser
VFW Post 448 Color Guard
Halloween Grand Marshall, Sheriff Carmen Massimiano
Berkshire County Sheriff's office float
Berkshire County House of Correction marchers
Pittsfield fire truck, Sparky & Live 105 staff
Pittsfield Winter Carnival Queen
Eagles Band
Stearns School float
Stearns School marchers
Highland School marchers
Miller Petroleum Systems float
Vicki's marchers
Pittsfield High School band
PHS color guard
PHS cheerleaders
Egremont School float
Egremont School marchers
Lanesboro cheerleaders float
Lanesboro cheerleaders marchers
Crosby School marchers
Taconic High School band
Taconic marchers
Williams School float
Williams School marchers
Morningside Community School float
Morningside Community School marchers
Conte Community School float
Conte Community School marchers
Conant fire truck
Pittsfield 4th of July Parade committee float
Pittsfield Police cruiser

10/26/00

Pittsfield's Halloween parade to step off Friday at 7 o'clock

PITTSFIELD — The city's 56th annual Halloween parade will step off at 7 p.m. this Friday.

Organizers said that marching units will line up on the south side of East Street no later than 6:30. Floats and vehicles are to line up on the north side of East Street facing Park Square no later than 6:30.

The line of march for this year's parade consists of 16 floats and vehicles, three marching bands and 14 schools and marching units. The parade begins on East Street and passes through Park Square onto North Street. It ends on Wahconah Street. Grand Marshal is Berkshire County Sheriff Carmen C. Massimiano.

Judges will award three prizes to floats and three prizes to bands: first prize is \$150, second is \$125 and third is \$100.

In addition, 25 individual award gift certificates will be presented to children marching in the parade. Selection of costume awards will be made prior to the parade by judges who will be stationed in the line-up area. Costume award winners will be presented ribbons to wear on their costumes.

Prizes can be redeemed with the back portion of the ribbons at the Department of Parks & Recreation, 874 North St., which sponsors the parade in conjunction with the city's Department of Community Services.

The parade line up is as follows:

Section I — Corner of First and East streets to Bartlett Avenue:

1. Pittsfield Police cruiser
2. VFW Post 448 color guard

3. Halloween Grand Marshall Sheriff Carmen C. Massimiano

4. Berkshire County Sheriff's Office float

5. Berkshire County House of Correction marchers

6. Pittsfield Fire Truck, Sparky, and Live 105 staff

7. Pittsfield Winter Carnival Queen

Section II — Bartlett Avenue to Pomeroy Avenue:

8. Eagles Band



Children in costume march in Pittsfield's 1955 Halloween parade.

William Tague / Eagle archiv



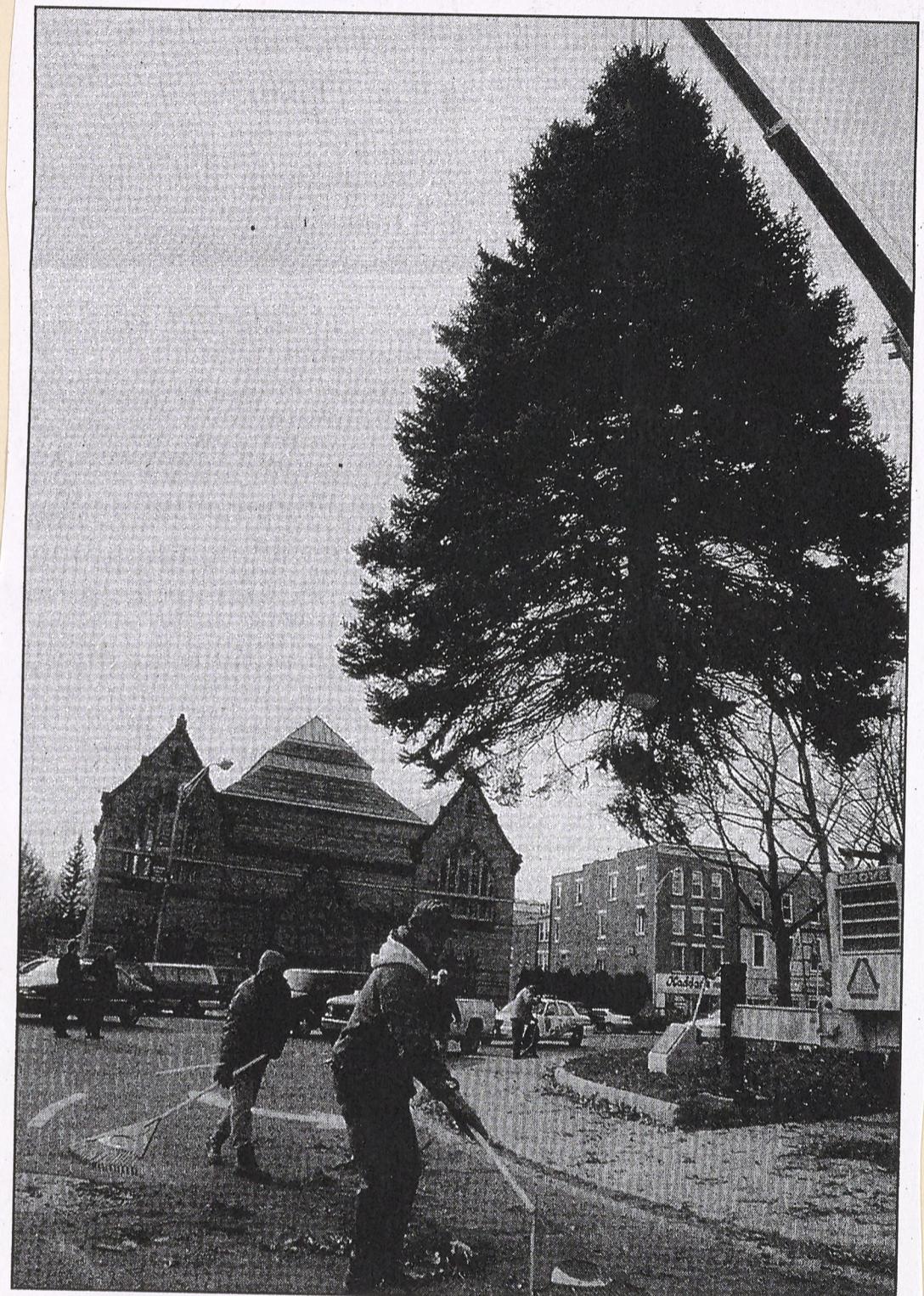
Lights in the darkness

A large crowd watches in frigid temperatures last night at the Christmas tree lighting on Park Square in Pittsfield.

Shannon DeCelles / Berkshire Eagle Staff
12/2/00



Tree trimming time



Photos by Ben Garver / Berkshire Eagle Staff
Pittsfield's Christmas tree was erected on Park Square yesterday. Top photo, Anthony Stracuzzi prepares to cut the base off the 50-foot blue spruce, which was donated by Lamar and Laurie Smith of 52 Edwards St. Above, city workers clean up after hoisting the tree into place. The tree-lighting ceremony will be held Dec. 1.

11/17/00

Youth softball registration is Saturday

The Pittsfield Parks and Recreation girls' softball league will hold registration sessions tomorrow from 9 a.m. to noon and on Monday from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Springside House, 874 North St.

Girls who are between ages nine and 16 as of Aug. 1 are eligible to play. Registration fee is \$20.

Information: 499-9343 or 499-9344.

417100

City holding girls' softball clinic

The Pittsfield Parks and Recreation girls' softball league and the St. Joseph's High School girls' softball team have announced that a modified fast-pitch softball clinic will be held on Saturday at the girls' softball field on Benedict Road from 9 to 11. Registration will 8:30.

The event is open to girls age 12-16. Girls will be sent through various stations (hitting, fielding, running, fielding). There will be a participation fee of \$5, which will be donated to the St. Joseph's High School girls' softball team.

611/00

The Pittsfield Gazette July 20, 2000

Girls' softball complex dedicated in memory of Doyle, Sr.

By Anthony Fyden

The new concession stand at the Gerald S. Doyle, Sr. softball complex served hot dogs and soft drinks on Wednesday.

City officials, parents and well-wishers celebrated the park's dedication, gazing approvingly at two impressive fields, new fencing and benches.

But the real mark of success for the Benedict Road park could be seen in the faces of the dozens of young girls who waited impatiently to take the field and play ball.

Community Services director Bob Mellace lauded the softball complex, which has hosted games since last year, as an example of city commitment and citizen volunteerism. Mellace noted that the city scraped

together enough funds last year to build two fields at the complex property, but a concession area and restrooms were set aside due to budget constraints.

Grassroots effort

When an ad-hoc group of business leaders and parents suggested that volunteers could finish the project, Mellace admits he was skeptical. "They definitely proved that they were capable of taking on this task," he said on Wednesday. "We had a good start with the two fields, but we all knew this wasn't enough."

With literally dozens of businesses, organizations and individuals pitching in with supplies and labor — and relying mainly on volunteer weekend work parties — the concession stand and restroom area eventually

became a reality.

Nearly every aspect of the facility can be traced to donated time or materials — from the planning of the Barry Architecture firm to the cinder blocks and concrete provided by County Concrete and Christopher Porter Builders. A small army of plumbers, carpenters, excavators, electrical workers and others also chipped in.

Tom Lussier, who oversees a girls softball league that uses the facility, said that the project started with "no funding and no help" and snowballed into a successful effort.

"It started out as some city employees' vision and it really ended up turning out to be a real accomplishment," he said.

Lussier, who is a son-in-law of the

late Doyle, Sr., said that people were anxious to help — particularly when they learned that the park would be dedicated to the longtime park advocate and former director of the city public works department and the Pittsfield Housing Authority.

Lussier added that money generated from the concession stand may eventually help to fund an additional field, park lighting or a sprinkler system.

Doyle, Sr. had advocated for a separate girls' softball complex since the 1970s, Lussier noted. Gerald Doyle, Jr., the current mayor and one-time city council president, took up the fight and lobbied for funding in the early 1990s.

Doyle, Jr. said that the completion of the concession area demonstrates

what can be accomplished with a common will. "It reminds me of a much more important thing, other than the game, and that's the community," Doyle, Jr. said.

Supported by Reilly

Doyle, Jr. also credited former Mayor Edward Reilly for championing the complex. "He stepped up to the plate and he deserves a round of applause for that," Doyle said.

An emotional Doyle, Jr. then unveiled a sign fronting the building touting the "Gerald S. Doyle, Sr. Girls' Softball Complex" to cheers from the audience.

Following the ceremony, the group enjoyed free refreshments and hot dogs from the concession stand — while teams took the field for two scheduled games during the evening.

Pittsfield junior football signups on tap

Registration for the Pittsfield Junior Football League will take place on Saturday from 9 a.m. until noon and on Monday from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Both registration sessions will take place at the Common Warming House on First Street.

Youngsters not older than 13 on Sept. 1, down to age 8 are eligible to register. All players will be assessed a \$15 equipment fee at registration. Players must have a medical waiver from a family physician to play, and a parent or guardian must bring a birth certificate to the registration.

Information: Parks and Recreation Dept., 499-9343.

20.00

8/1/00

Pittsfield junior FB tryouts begin Monday

Tryouts for the Pittsfield Junior Football League will begin on Monday, Aug. 14, at The Common on First Street, beginning at 5:45 p.m.

The league is open to children ages 8-14, and is limited to kids through grade 8. Age is determined as of Sept. 1, 2000.

A fee of \$15 with a parent and physician approval is required.

Information: Carol Mazza, 499-9483.

8/1/00

Pittsfield junior football ticket drive set

The Pittsfield Junior Football League will hold its annual season ticket sale on Saturday, Sept. 2, at 10 a.m.

All league players and coaches will participate in the door-to-door campaign, and players can be identified by their football jerseys.

Drivers are needed and all parents wishing to volunteer should report to the First Street Common's warming house at 9:30 a.m.

8/16/00

57.

Firetruck ride, then off to Bristol

P-South All-Stars will start regional tourney tomorrow

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The fun has just begun.

Pittsfield South, already with a treasure of memories, will need more room in the scrapbook this week. The Little League state champions will get a spin around the city this morning on a firetruck before heading out by bus (provided by the city) to Bristol, Conn. to compete in the Little League Eastern Regionals.

The South All-Stars, which Saturday blanked East Lynn twice in Beverly to win the state championship, are scheduled to take the field tomorrow morning at 10 against Lincoln, R.I. at the A. Bartlett Giamatti Little League Leadership Training Center.

Today, the team will hop on a Pittsfield firetruck at Deming Field at 9:30, take a ride down First Street and then return heading south on North Street.

When the team returns to Deming, it's off to Bristol in pursuit of a chance to play in the Little League World Series scheduled for later in August in Williamsport, Pa.

"This whole thing has been a whirlwind tour, and it's

just getting started," said South manager Joe Skutnik.

The tournament is interesting to say the least and will provide Pittsfield with a chance to play at least five games over a six-day span.

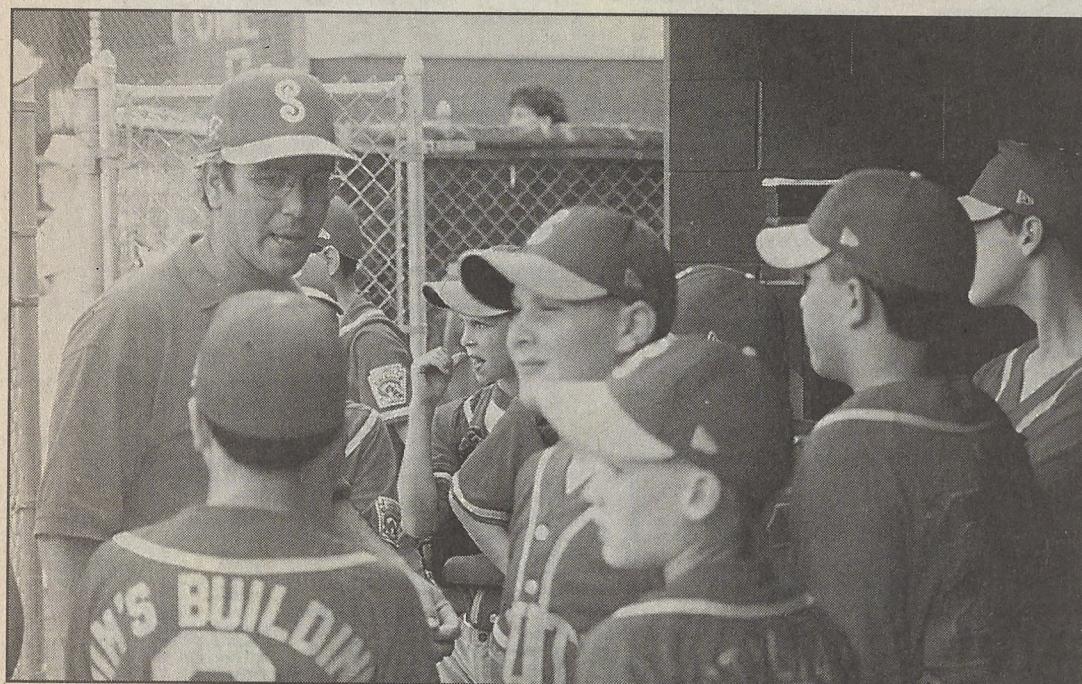
The 12 teams in the tournament will be divided into two six-team pools. Each team will play five games within their pool. The top four in each division then will play in a single-elimination mini-tournament.

The fourth-place team would play the first-place team, while No. 2 and No. 3 would face off. The winners would then play to determine a winner from the six-team pool.

Then, the two divisional winners play Aug. 17 at 8 p.m. for a chance to go to Williamsport.

Also joining Pittsfield in the Northeast division are state champions Old Lyme, Conn.; Auburn Suburban (Maine); Brattleboro, (Vermont) and Goffstown (New Jersey). The Mid-Atlantic Region consists of Capital City (District of Columbia); Pequannock (New Jersey); Levittown East (Pennsylvania); Roland Paulino (New York); Northeast (Maryland) and Milford (Delaware).

SOUTH, continued on C6



It's off to Bristol, Conn. today for the Pittsfield South All-Stars. In photo above taken during state tournament play in Beverly, manager Joe Skutnik imparts some wisdom to his team. Players in foreground are Tim Burns, Joe Bastow, Dan Murphy and Brian Barber.

South from C1

Rolando Paulino and Capital City are also defending state champions.

Among the festivities planned for the city squad, which will be housed in one of the dorms at the complex, is a tour of the ESPN studios which are located in Bristol, a banquet, a trip to the Lake Compounce Amusement Park, and several cookouts.

Playing five games in the next week is going to be an ordeal. But while the schedule might be a grind, the pressure might not be as great in the pool-play format as it was in the double-elimination state tournament. Most feel that three wins would guarantee a top four finish in the pool and the chance to move on.



Jeff Fields, right, kept Pittsfield South on the winning track with a win on Friday night against Middleboro. Nick Bianchi, left, and catcher Brendan Burke were the first to greet Fields after his key pitching win.



Bubbling with optimism

Kris McLaughlin of the Pittsfield South Little League All-Star team chews bubble gum as he watches his team compete in the state tournament in Beverly. Pittsfield won yesterday, 4-1, and will play East Lynn for the title today. Coverage, Page C1.

Patricia McDonnell / Associated Press

South makes Final Four

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

HOLDEN — Pittsfield South manager Joe Skutnik hides little from his team. But for the last month, he has been holding one personal goal. Yesterday, his "Little Red" machine answered that withheld wish.

David Glass tossed a four-hitter and benefited from two inning-ending double plays as South snapped a 1-1 tie with a pair of runs in the bottom of the fourth inning en route to a 3-1 victory over Jesse Burkett of Worcester in the state Section 1 championship game at the Holden Little League Field.

"I had one personal goal, and it was to get to the state championship [tournament]," said a jubilant Skutnik, whose team now advances to the state Final Four tournament scheduled to be played in Beverly starting Wednesday night. "I never told these guys, but I wanted to get there to bring back some of the baseball pride to the city of Pittsfield."

"I thought that if we could get there, people would be able to read about it, and feel good about it. These kids just continue to get it done when they have to. Now, they're going to get to enjoy it."

The state tournament will involve the Pittsfield team and three other state sectional winners. The winner of the double-elimination tournament advances to the regional tournament slated for Bristol, Conn., the following week.

Worcester tied the game 1-1 in the third with South ending that threat with a twin killing. Worcester threatened again in the fourth but the South again came up with a big double play, their sixth in the last two games.

SOUTH, continued on C6



Pittsfield South's Joey Bastow, at left, celebrates the team's 3-1 win yesterday in Holden. The victory puts the Pittsfield Little League team into the state Final Four. In the middle of the huddle is South winning pitcher David Glass. *7/30/00*

South from C1

Worcester's Kyle Quist opened the fourth with a base hit. With one out, pinch-hitter Craig Doyle reached on an infield hit that Glass got a glove on but couldn't grab. Pat O'Donnell then walked to load the bases. Pinch-hitter Max Richman then sent a hard ground up the middle, but this time Glass gloved and fired to catcher Brendan Burke for the force out. Burke then rifled the ball to first in time to get the double play and end the inning.

"Even when these kids were playing in the Jimmy Fund Tournament as nine and 10 year olds, we turned three 4-6-3 double plays," said Skutnik. "Even at that age they were capable of making the plays, so defense has never been an issue."

Said Worcester coach Steve Quist: "I know [the Pittsfield] coaches are probably aware of it, but I've always felt that the most difficult play to make on a Little League field, because of the distance, is the double play."

"It takes great execution, and Pittsfield did that on several occasions today. That's one talented team they have there, and I think they're going to do very well."

Having dodged that bases-loaded bullet, South came right back and mounted a rally of their own that resulted in the deciding runs.

Tim Burns opened the inning with a base hit to left off southpaw Quist. Kris McLaughlin followed with an infield hit, sending Burns to second. Pinch-hitter Joe Skutnik then dropped a bunt, and all runners were safe when Quist's throw to third was off line. Pinch-hitter Brian Barber bounced into a fielder's choice that retired Burns at the plate. Pinch-hitter Adams Simeone followed with a ground ball up the middle that Worcester shortstop



Pittsfield South pitcher David Glass scored the first run of the game yesterday. He tripled and then is shown above scoring on a wild pitch. Glass also drove in an insurance run and was the winning pitcher. The South squad now heads to Beverly on Wednesday in the state Final Four.

Kevin White got a glove on. But his only play was at second, and McLaughlin scampered home with tying run. Glass then ripped a double down the line in left to score Skutnik to make it 3-1.

Glass retired the final six batters in order, aided by a pair of stellar plays behind him in the sixth inning. The first came when second baseman Jeff Fields went far to his left to track down a ground ball by Chris Peniazek, throwing the Worcester runner out from his knees.

Adam Chaffee followed with a bullet to third that was gloved by Joe Bastow. Glass then fanned the 6-foot-1 Chaffee to end the game.

"Once we got those two runs, I settled down a lot," said Glass, who finished with seven strikeouts and has allowed just one run in his last two outings. "Our defense turned four double plays the other day. I'm just glad they had a couple more in them today."

Glass scored the first South run when he led off the first with a triple and later scored on a wild pitch.

The South's Burke celebrated and then looked down the road.

"We knew a team from the South hasn't gone to the state tournament since 1994, but we had to focus on this one first. Now, we'll see how we can do."

Glass retired the final six batters in order and was aided by a pair of stellar defensive plays in the sixth. Jeff Fields and Joey Bastow each made nice plays in the field.

P-South All-Stars stay alive



Pittsfield South's Tim Burns tags out East Lynn's Justin Narducci before he can cross first base during the fourth inning of Thursday night's state Little League game at Harry Ball Field in Beverly. The Pittsfield team lost a 4-1 decision but defeated Middleboro yesterday by the same score to advance to today's championship game. Pittsfield is in the loser's bracket and must defeat East Lynn twice today to claim the title.

Fields goes the distance in 4-1 win

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

BEVERLY — Jeff Fields had not thrown from the mound in a competitive situation since the Berkshire County tournament. In his young life he had never authored a complete game.

Yesterday, Fields came through in spectacular fashion, striking out eight and scattering four hits to lead Pittsfield South to a 4-1 win over Middleboro in the loser's bracket finals of the state Little League tournament.

The Pittsfield team used the win to advance to today's championship game. For the South, they're hoping for games. Being in the loser's bracket, Pittsfield will need to defeat East Lynn twice today to claim the commonwealth crown.

The first game will begin at 4 with the second game, if necessary, slated for 7.

No surprise to the coach

"Jeff came in and just did an outstanding job today, and I knew he was capable of it," said South manager Joe Skutnik. "We teach these kids to throw to a chase zone, and because he was ahead in the count the whole game, he was able to hit his spots."

"I knew from the minute these kids pulled in today that they were ready to play. And it showed."

Skutnik had the option of putting the ball in the hands of his ace, David Glass, yesterday, but opted not to since Glass had pitched six innings on Wednesday. Fields' effort and win took everyone off the hook.

South threatened in the first inning when they loaded the bases with two outs, but Middleboro starter Kyle Lortie got Brendan Burke to bounce into a fielder's choice to end the inning.

Middleboro, which lost to Pittsfield 8-0 on Wednesday night, came right back with a threat of its own in the bottom of the frame.

Trevor Cleveland opened the inning with a hit to left. Fields fanned Billy Lydon, but Brendan Moquin and Lortie followed with hits to load the bases. Fields, however, whiffed the next to batters without allowing a run.

SOUTH, continued on C3

State champions

On Saturday, the Pittsfield South All-Stars became the top Little League team in Massachusetts. The team's triumphant ride on a city fire truck along First and North streets yesterday was an opportunity for the community to see and congratulate the young athletes. Many factors contribute to the success of a team: the presence on the roster of a "natural" or two, hard work, and good coaching are among them. The best coaches are true teachers who seek not only to instill knowledge of the game but to exemplify good sportsmanship. Such examples leave lifelong impressions on young people, and Pittsfield is fortunate to have many youth sports coaches who understand that.

8/8/00

South from C1

"Coach told me I was going to pitch, but I didn't believe him," said Fields. "I was pretty nervous in the first inning, but it helped a bunch when I struck out those two kids."

"That was big right there," said Middleboro manager Dick Sinnott, whose team managed only one hit after the first inning. "Again, today, we didn't have the bats, but their kid did a great job on the mound and had a great mix of pitches."

"Kids are not allowed to throw curves in our league, so we don't have much exposure to it. Still, I don't know if that was that much of a difference."

Buoyed by Fields' escape act in the first, South rose for three runs in the top of the second. Joe Bastow opened the inning with a base hit to center. Dan Murphy and Fields both fell behind 0-2 in the count before drawing walks to load the bases.

Two-run single from Glass

Glass followed with a shot to right that scored both Bastow and Murphy. Fields advanced to third and Glass to second when the ball was misplayed.

Chad Brown followed with a bunt single, but Glass was tagged out when he was caught too far off the base. Fields, who had held on the play, then broke for home, and scored to make it 3-0 when the throw short-hopped catcher Josh McLaughlin and bounced to the backstop.

Pittsfield missed a chance to score in the third, but did add a run in the fourth.

Glass singled with one out and Brown reached on a fielder's choice that retired Glass. Brown then went to second on a hit by Dan Haddad. Brian Barber drew a walk, Middleboro then bringing in relief pitcher Jon Miller.

With Tim Burns at the plate, Miller uncorked a wild pitch that allowed Brown to score to improve the lead to 4-0.

Fields continued to breeze on the mound, and retired nine in a row until McLaughlin singled with one out in the home fourth. Pinch-hitter Chris Morrison reached on an error that sent McLaughlin to third, and McLaughlin then scored on a ground out by Miller.

Fields, however, closed shop after that. He allowed one runner the rest of the way.

"I saw David [Glass] warming up in the last inning, but I knew if I was doing well they would leave me in the game," said Fields. "Now we've got David to pitch the first game, and then Dan [Haddad] in the second. We've still got a shot."

Fields' effort was not lost on his teammates.

Happy to take the hill

"I wanted to pitch today, but now I can go tomorrow," said Glass, who had three of Pittsfield's 11 hits. "Jeff got us to tomorrow. That's all we wanted."

Skutnik, too, felt that his kids wanted another shot at an East Lynn team that beat them 4-1 on Thursday night.

"In all honesty, I think these kids were embarrassed by how we played in that first game," Skutnik said. "I feel good about [Saturday]. David only threw 59 pitches on Wednesday, and Danny pitched well too, and I know he wants another shot at East Lynn."

"We've got a good shot in the first game. We'll see what happens in the second game."

Bastow, Haddad and Brian Barber all finished with two hits for Pittsfield.

8/5/00

★ Sunday, August 6, 2000

State champions



Pittsfield South All-Star Chad Brown slides safely into home during play Friday night at the state Little League championships in Beverly.

South from C1

David Glass on the mound. My only question was what would happen in the second game. And Danny had the answer for me."

The South All-Stars now advances to the Eastern Regionals in Bristol, Conn. They are scheduled to open against Rhode Island at 10 a.m. on Tuesday.

Pittsfield will play at least five games in what will be a 12-team field that will be split into two six-team pools. Two teams will emerge from each pool after all have played five games. That mini-tournament will produce a winner that will go to Williamsport, Pa., for the Little League World Series.

Glass set up Haddad, who had pitched well in a 4-1 loss to East Lynn on Thursday night. The two South pitchers combined to allow just four hits and, of course, no runs.

Pittsfield faced East Lynn's Chris Carroll in the nightcap. He had one hit the South squad on Thursday. But South came out swinging and plated two runs in

the second after getting two hits in a scoreless first.

Brendan Burke and Joe Bastow opened the second with walks. One out later Adam Simeone walked to load the bases. Glass then ripped a bullet to third baseman Justin Narducci, but Narducci's throw home was off line and Burke scored. Carroll then hit Tim Burns to force in another run.

More offense

South added two more runs in the third. Chad Brown opened the inning with a single. Burke followed with a fielder's choice that retired Brown for the first out. Bastow followed with a base hit to center to send Burke to second. Burke then scored on consecutive wild pitches, and Bastow scored on an error.

Haddad, meanwhile, was in complete control, and aided in large part by a pair of big defensive plays behind him.

In the third inning, East Lynn had runners on second and third with two outs, but Haddad retired the next hitter on a comebacker to end the inning. In the fourth,

P-South tops in commonwealth after blanking East Lynn twice

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

BEVERLY — If Dan Haddad didn't understand about destiny before the state Little League tournament, then he should have a better grasp of that word now.

Presented with an opportunity to be a member of this year's Pittsfield South All-Star team because another player in the league passed on that chance, Haddad did more than just become a contributing member to the squad.

Yesterday, he pitched the Pittsfield South squad to a state championship.

On an afternoon that those connected closely to the team will not forget for a

very long time, Haddad pitched the game of his life, striking out eight and allowing three hits in a complete-game, 5-0 victory over East Lynn.

That effort followed a gem by South ace David Glass. Playing out of the loser's bracket, Pittsfield needed to win twice yesterday. And without Glass there would have been no Haddad.

Glass allowed only a leadoff double in winning the opener 2-0 at Harry Ball Field.

"Right now, I'm kind of at a loss for words," said South manager Joe Skutnik. "Jeff Fields did his job [Friday], and we liked out chances in the first game with

SOUTH, continued on C6

Burke also gunned down a runner trying to steal second.

In the fifth, Narducci singled and John Rijo followed with a fielder's choice for the first out. But Valdez walked, bringing the top of the East Lynn order to the plate.

Haddad fanned Carroll for the second out but it looked like trouble for the Pittsfield team when Matt Prunier hit a fly ball that appeared to be headed for the right-field corner. South outfielder Kris McLaughlin raced in, dove and came up the ball to end the inning.

"Chad Brown played huge in the first game, and Kris came up with the biggest play of them all in the second game," said Skutnik. "Pitching and defense are what got us here, and today it was the difference. We shut them out for 12 innings. That's amazing."

South scored its final run on an RBI single by Haddad in the sixth.

"It didn't matter how I got on this team, and I think they would've gone this far whether I'd been here or not," said Haddad.

"I'm just glad to be here, and grateful to Jeff and David for giving me another chance to pitch against these guys."

"I wasn't nervous, and I wasn't too afraid. I think some of David is starting to rub off on me."

In the first game, Glass' one-hitter was backed by Bastow's two-run single in the second.

The turning point in the first game came in the first inning. Carroll opened with a double for East Lynn. That set off a celebration in the East Lynn dugout.

But Glass was a portrait of poise, striking out the next three batters to end the threat.

Chad Brown, who had an outstanding game at shortstop opened the second with an infield hit off East Lynn pitcher David Kolozetski and went to second on a wild pitch.

Brendan Burke followed with a ground ball that East Lynn shortstop Jairo Valdez gloved, but when he wheeled to fire to third to get Brown, the ball popped out. Bastow then followed with his single.

Glass struck out six and retired the final 11 consecutive batters.

Pittsfield South is set for showdowns

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

8/14/00
8 p.m. for the Northeast title. The winner of that game advances to the Eastern Regional title game on Thursday night against the winner of the Mid-Atlantic Pool. Thursday's game will be televised on ESPN2.

Skutnik will pitch Dan Haddad today.

"I don't have any problems sending Danny to the mound, he's done the job several times," said Skutnik. "Most teams will be sending out their top pitchers, so I expect low scoring games. We might be the only team here who has just as much confidence in our No. 2 as we do in our No. 1. That's a great thing to have."

Haddad faced Old Lyme last Thursday, and came up on the short end of a 3-2 score. In that game, Haddad gave up just two hits and struck out nine. Winning pitcher Mike Neaton scattered six hits and struck out 10 Pittsfield South batters.

South finished pool play with a record of 3-2. Up next for Pittsfield South is a date with Old Lyme, Conn. Old Lyme defeated Lincoln, R.I. 16-6 in a night game.

The Pittsfield 9 will play today at either 3 or 8 p.m. The exact time of the game was not determined at press time, although it is expected that the Pittsfield game will be at 3 p.m.

The tournament now shifts into single-elimination mode — lose once and go home.

The winner of today's two games will play tomorrow night at

While his team lost to Old Lyme in the first meeting, Skutnik said he'd rather not face Goffstown and its fire-balling right-hander Josh Gregory. He's getting his wish.

"We wanted to stay away from New Hampshire, and it will be great to have another battle with Connecticut," said Skutnik. "The next two days should be a lot of fun."



8/14/00
Pittsfield South's Brian Barber rips into a pitch by Goffstown, N.H., pitcher Steve Desjarlais during yesterday's Eastern Regional game. The Goffstown catcher is Josh Gregory.



The Pittsfield South All-Stars took a spin around the city yesterday morning before departing for Bristol, Conn., to begin play in the Eastern Regionals. The state champion's open today at 10 against Lincoln, R.I.

South rests, resumes play today

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

BRISTOL, Conn. — It started with a firetruck ride around the city. It ended here at the A. Bartlett Giamatti Center, where the Pittsfield South All-Stars were quartered the last night prior to today's game against Lincoln, R.I. in the opening contest of the Little League Eastern Regionals at Breen Field.

If the day sounded exhausting, it probably was for the state champions. But with five games in six days looming, it might have been the most fun they will have all week.

"Baseball is the reason why we're going down there, but at this point, having fun is just as important," said South manager Joe Skutnik, yesterday before team boarded a bus at City Hall in Pittsfield following the ride and ceremonies at the corner office. "Somehow, though, we have to get ready for that first game. We'll talk on the way down for awhile, but then we get our pictures taken and the whirlwind starts again when we get there."

"I'm not worried about these kids being focused, though, because from the minute they pulled in the parking lot for the second Middleboro game last Friday, they've shown me they know how to get ready."

The glow from winning the state title has remained with the players. But there's a new opportunity for glory still out there.

"This is incredible, and it still hasn't set in," said South outfielder Brian Barber, as he eyed the crowd of some 200 well-wishers at City Hall. "I don't think any of us expected this kind of thing, but I think we'll all be ready to go tomorrow."

"I didn't expect us to be in this kind of thing," admitted South player Joey Flynn, who like many cut short his family vacation at Martha's Vineyard and returned home with his father last night. This has been bigger than I thought it would be. We're going to have a blast."

It was nothing short of chaos yesterday at the Giamatti Center as all 12 teams arrived, were checked in to their adjoining dorms with bunk beds, assembled for team photos and then shuttled off to a banquet last night.

Off in the distance, Little League officials were putting the finishing touches on Breen Field, a beautiful site that had many of the South players at a loss for words.

Pittsfield is in one of two six-team pools. The top four in each pool will play in a single-elimination tournament next week. Skutnik said he believes three wins in the five games the South is scheduled to play should be enough to get the city team in the sec-

SOUTH, continued on C3

The Berkshire Eagle, Saturday, August 12, 2000 — C3

Pittsfield South is cleaning up during Little League tournament

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

BRISTOL, Conn. — As significant as the run for Pittsfield South has been to qualify for the elimination play that begins on Monday, the best effort for the local squad might be one they are making off the field.

Would their parents ever be surprised. Not only are they in the hunt for a top four finish in the Northeast Pool, the Little Red Machine is locked in a four-way tie with New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania for the cleanest dormitory. Rooms are inspected twice a day, with little notice as to when the time will be.

After a slow start and much to the surprise of the coaching staff, the South squad has literally picked up the ball, or in this case, room. How serious are they about taking home the top prize, which includes bats and other items? On Wednesday, an as yet-to-be-identified player actually asked for the vacuum. South avoided near catastrophe on Thursday night when two pizzas that had been sneaked into their room were not found by officials. Had those pies been found out, South could have been tossed from the dorm.

Wednesday night's rain storm that passed through Berkshire County also rolled through Bristol, waking the coaching staff as lightning cracked down all around. As loud as the thun-

der was, the South players slept right through it. In fact, if there is one thing Pittsfield South has had problems doing, it is getting up for the 9 a.m. breakfast. The snack counter attendants are now on a first-name basis with the entire local contingent.

That rain was the only bad weather that the tournament has had thus far, and it has been a welcome thing for league officials. One rain date is built into the schedule, but beyond that officials might be forced to remove some of the elimination-round games in order to get a champion. All are hopeful that this will not happen.

South was hit by a couple of minor injuries prior to their game against Connecticut on Thursday. In the afternoon, outfielder Nick Bianchi took a lump on the head when his bat smacked off one of the bunk beds and came back and hit him. That night, Jeff Fields was hit by a pitch during batting practice. Fields was cleared to play that night, while Bianchi was expected to be back in the lineup for yesterday's game.

It might seem hard to believe, but Pittsfield South might have gotten here a year too soon. Next year, the Little League World Series in Williamsport, Pa. will expand to 16 teams with an as yet to be named stadium

North Little League title goes to Fire Department

PITTSFIELD — The Fire Department went out with a flourish, to win the North Little League championship.

The first-half champions beat second-half champ Greylock Federal Credit Union twice to claim the North Crown.

In the first game, Clayton Pierce had three hits and Stefan Ogle had two as the Fire Department beat Greylock 6-3. Justin Rivelli got the win. Eric Girard drove in two of Greylock's three runs.

In the second game, Clayton Pierce authored a shutout as the Fire Department rolled to the North title with an 11-0 win.

Pierce helped his cause with two hits, one of five Fire Department players to get two hits. Rivelli, Adam Killeen, Justin Kisselbrook and John Penna also had two hits each.

8/13/00

ot

8/13/00

Go, South



Pittsfield South all-star David Glass, shown above in Berkshire County tournament action, is expected to take the mound today. The city team is seeking a state sectional title.

P-South takes aim at sectional crown

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — After winning two games in as many days in the state Little League sectional tournament, the Berkshire County champion Pittsfield South All-Stars have had the past couple of days off to rest and recover.

Today, the journey to the state finals will begin again for the local squad. And while the team will be well-rested, the same can't be said about their opponents.

Pittsfield South will play today at 1 p.m. in Holden against Jesse Burkett of Worcester for the Section 1 title. The state tournament is divided into four sectional tournaments with the winners advancing to the state tournament on Wednesday at Harry Ball Field in Beverly.

Worcester club rallies late

Burkett, which rallied for three runs in the bottom of the 11th to beat Fitchburg West in the loser's bracket final on Thursday night, will need to beat Pittsfield twice to advance.

A second game, if needed, would be played following the first one. While South has been idle since beating Fitchburg West 4-2 on Tuesday night, Burkett comes in riding the emotion of their extra-inning win over Fitchburg.

In that game, Fitchburg struck for a pair of runs in the top of the 10th to snap a scoreless tie. Undaunted, Burkett came right back with three scores in the bottom of the inning.

After the first two batters walked, Adam Chaffee, who pitched the first nine innings, ripped a two-run triple to left-center to tie the game. With two outs, Pat O'Neil singled home Chaffee with the game-winning run.

Chaffee allowed eight hits and struck out 13.

Pittsfield is expected to send David Glass to the mound in the opener. Glass last pitched on Monday in a 5-0 win over Westfield North. In that game, he allowed just five hits and struck out four.

7/29/00

Pittsfield squads in finals

Jimmy Fund title is up for grabs

Eagle Staff Reports

It's going to be an all-Pittsfield championship final in the Berkshire County Jimmy Fund Age 9-10 Little League tournament.

Pittsfield South CD used a four-run first inning and never looked back, defeating Great Barrington 9-1 in yesterday's semifinal. The game had been rescheduled because of Sunday's rain.

Pittsfield West White was victorious in its bracket on Sunday, downing Sheffield 11-1 in a game ended by the mercy rule after four innings.

The two will meet in the championship today at 5:30 p.m. at Deming Field in Pittsfield.

The consolation game was won by Pittsfield South Gray 14-4 over Pittsfield West Blue.

Pittsfield South 9, G. Barr 1

Keyed by a two-RBI single by Cody Clevolo, a four spot after one inning proved deadly to Great Barrington yesterday. Pitchers Danny Bernardo and Andrew Dorr used that lead to their advantage and cruised, allowing only a single run in the game between the two pushing Pittsfield South CD's record to 3-0 in the tournament.

Adding single runs in the second and third, Pittsfield South CD put the game away in the fourth, scoring three more runs on singles by Tim Snyder, Jacob Rand and Trevor Pemble. Both pitchers also helped themselves by lining singles of their own in the rallies.

Adam Ringler and Robert Mahoney had base hits for Great Barrington.

Pittsfield West 11, Sheffield 1

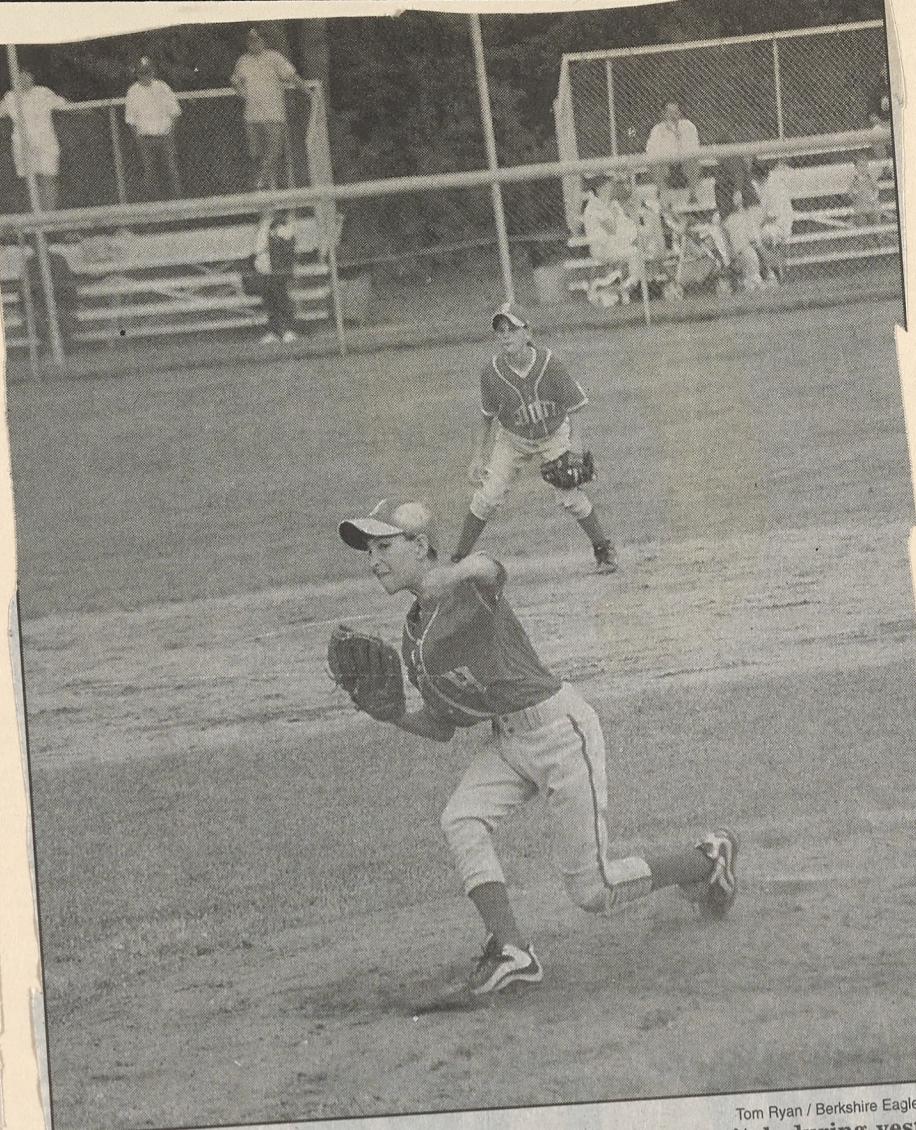
Bryan Betters had two hits with three RBIs and pitched solidly as Pittsfield West White advanced to the championship. Scott Shaker and Jordan Rahman also had single hits each to go along with two RBIs as Pittsfield West White tallied eight runs in the second after posting three in the opening frame.

Chance Rueger and Ryan Ulrich each had hits in defeat for Sheffield.

Consolation game

Ryan Aitken had a double and triple with three RBIs and Josh Pinard added another RBI triple to lead Pittsfield South Gray in Sunday's consolation game. Dan Joslyn picked up the victory.

Pat Sheehan, Bill Heaphy, and Kyle LaRochelle all had base hits for Pittsfield West Blue in the loss.



Pittsfield South pitcher Adam Simeone lets fly with a pitch during yesterday's Little League Eastern Regional game at Bristol, Conn. Looking on is South shortstop Chad Brown.

Loss doesn't hurt P-South

Local 9 advance in tourney

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

BRISTOL, Conn. — Putting the uniforms back on for another game less than 24 hours after an emotional win is tough for any team. For the members of the Pittsfield South Little League All-Stars, it proved to be a bit more than they could handle.

Less than a day after South rallied for four runs in their final at-bat to post a 4-3 win over Brattleboro, Vt., the Little Red Machine sputtered yesterday. Goffstown, N.H., beat Pittsfield South 6-2 in the final Northeast Pool play game for both teams at Breen Field. Steve Desjarlais gave up three hits in the New Hampshire team's victory.

SOUTH, continued on C3

South from C1 8/14/00

first All-Star pitching appearance this summer.

Brendan Burke started for Pittsfield, and pitched two scoreless innings before running into trouble in the third.

Alex Soblow opened the inning with a single, but was thrown out by left-fielder Nick Bianchi trying to stretch the hit into a double. Eric Szumiesz followed with a double and went to third on a base hit by Steve Desjarlais. Desjarlais took second when the throw went to the plate. Burke fanned Jonathan Berube for the second out, but Darren McLean followed with a single up the middle to score both runners. Ben Collins singled McLean to third, Josh Gregory then singled home McLean, and Collins scored on a pair of wild pitches.

"We were playing for the win in this game, because we want the No. 1 seed going into tomorrow," said New Hampshire manager Frank Szumiesz. "We've been following Pittsfield right through

their state tournament, and we saw how tough they were in their win last night."

Adam Simeone pitched one inning and Dan Murphy tossed two for Pittsfield South.

"We wanted this one, but our pitching is a bit out of whack," said Skutnik. "Had this been a perfect scenario, we probably would've had Jeff Fields out there today. But Brendan, Adam, and Dan all pitched pretty well, and I'm glad all of them got that experience."

Goffstown added two more unearned runs in the fifth before the Pittsfield bats came to life.

Held to hitless for the first 3 1/3 innings by Goffstown starter Desjarlais, Kris McLaughlin broke up the no-hit bid with a single in the fourth. An inning later, Pittsfield put together two more hits to score their only runs of the game.

John Skutnik opened the inning by drawing a walk and went to third on a double by Joe Flynn. Tim Burns then singled home Skutnik and Flynn came home on a ground out by Murphy.



Concerts in the Park

The Eagles Band Wind Ensemble performed at Springside Park on Tuesday evening, accompanied by the wind. Strong gusts toppled music stands, scattered sheet music and had audience members holding onto their hats. The musicians and the hundreds of audience members took the summer breezes in stride, however, and enjoyed the show.



This is one concert where the performers don't mind if the audience dozes a bit while enjoying the show.

7/20/02

Lindsey Wick, Parker James Rahilly, Bethany McBain, Julianne McBain and Zachary Rahilly enjoyed lollipops and ice cream with the music at Springside Park.



The city's official band will provide its next nostalgic free concert on August 8.



Park Square traffic revisions eyed, again

By Anthony Fyden

Park Square, with its bubbling fountain and towering Civil War statue, is among the most recognizable symbols of Pittsfield. It is also a traffic nightmare and a pedestrian hazard.

While the city council has voted three times in recent years to modify the traffic flow — which currently forces northbound traffic on South Street around Park Square to North Street — nothing has changed.

But Mayor Gerald Doyle, Jr. now says that modifying Park Square remains a priority, although he concedes that the change will not be a simple one. "I think it's something that we need to do," Doyle said on Wednesday.

The first step in the process is to develop an engineering plan. Doyle noted that former city engineer Jeff Collingwood partially developed but did not complete a design a few years ago.

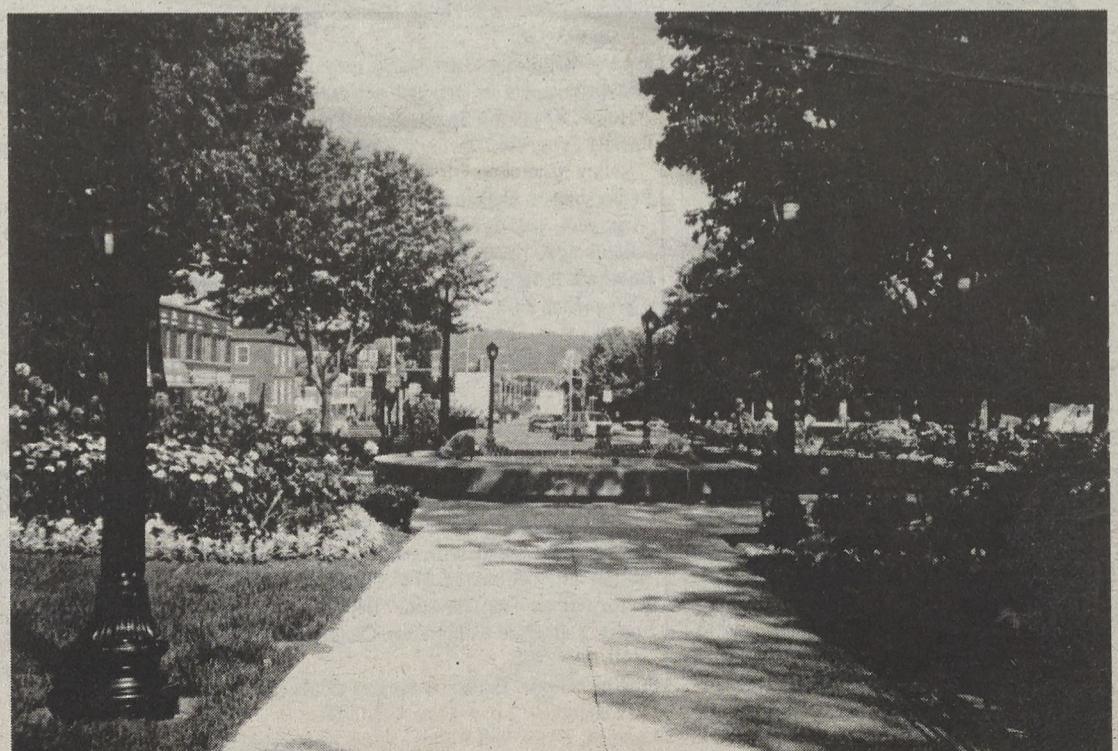
The mayor said that his goal is to create a plan that allows two-way traffic from South to North street without traversing the square, while improving pedestrian access.

Currently, pedestrians coming from North Street must cross two traffic islands before reaching the city park while walkers on South Street face a similar situation.

Doyle believes that the redesign should be a straightforward plan — and will not include relocating Park Square as has been discussed in the past.

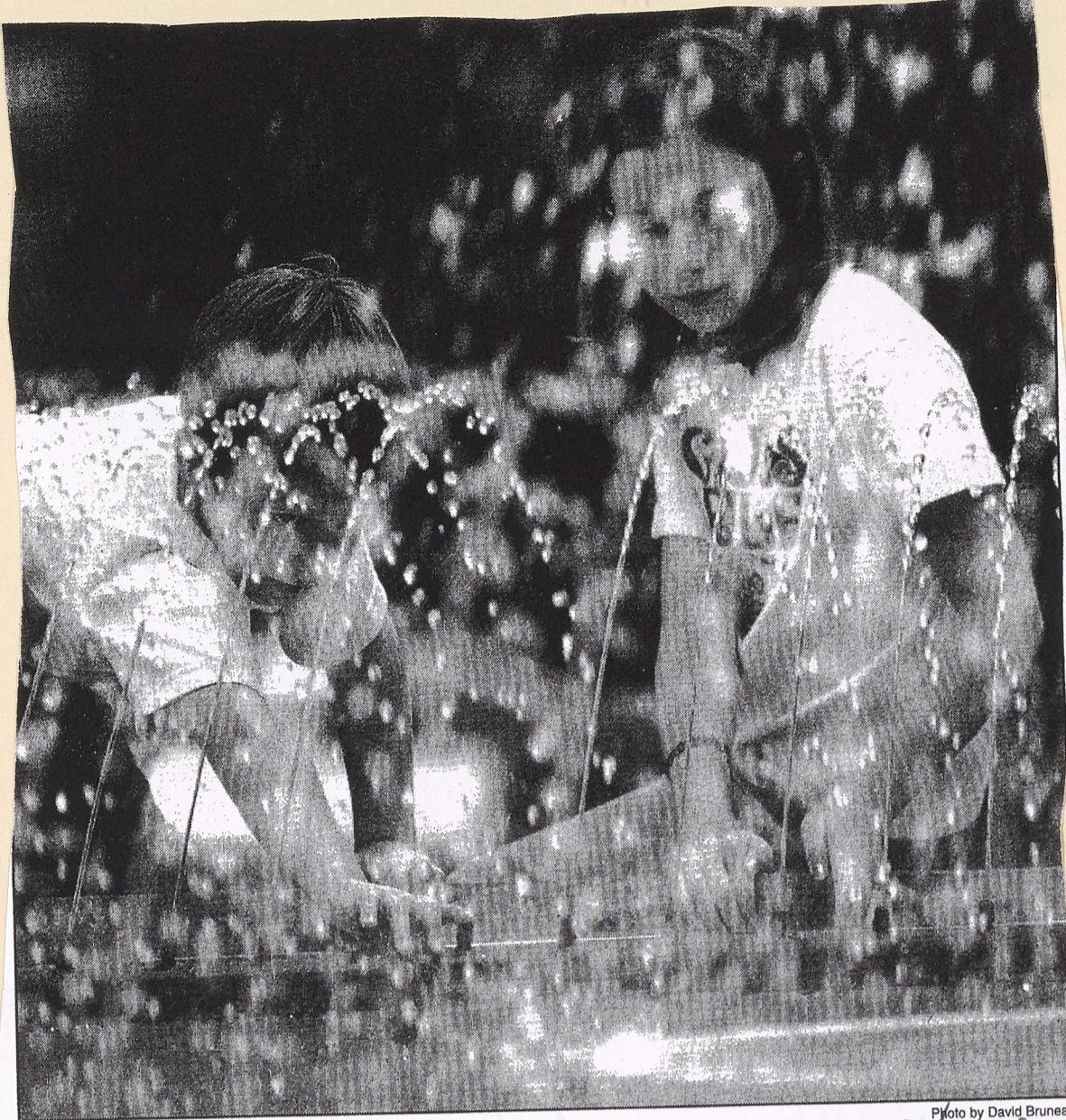
"We will not move Park Square, I can guarantee you that," Doyle said. Public works commissioner Bill Forestell said that, since the city

See PARK SQUARE page 23



Park Square may be a downtown oasis, but some people believe the park should be more accessible for pedestrians and less complicated for motorists.

8/17/02



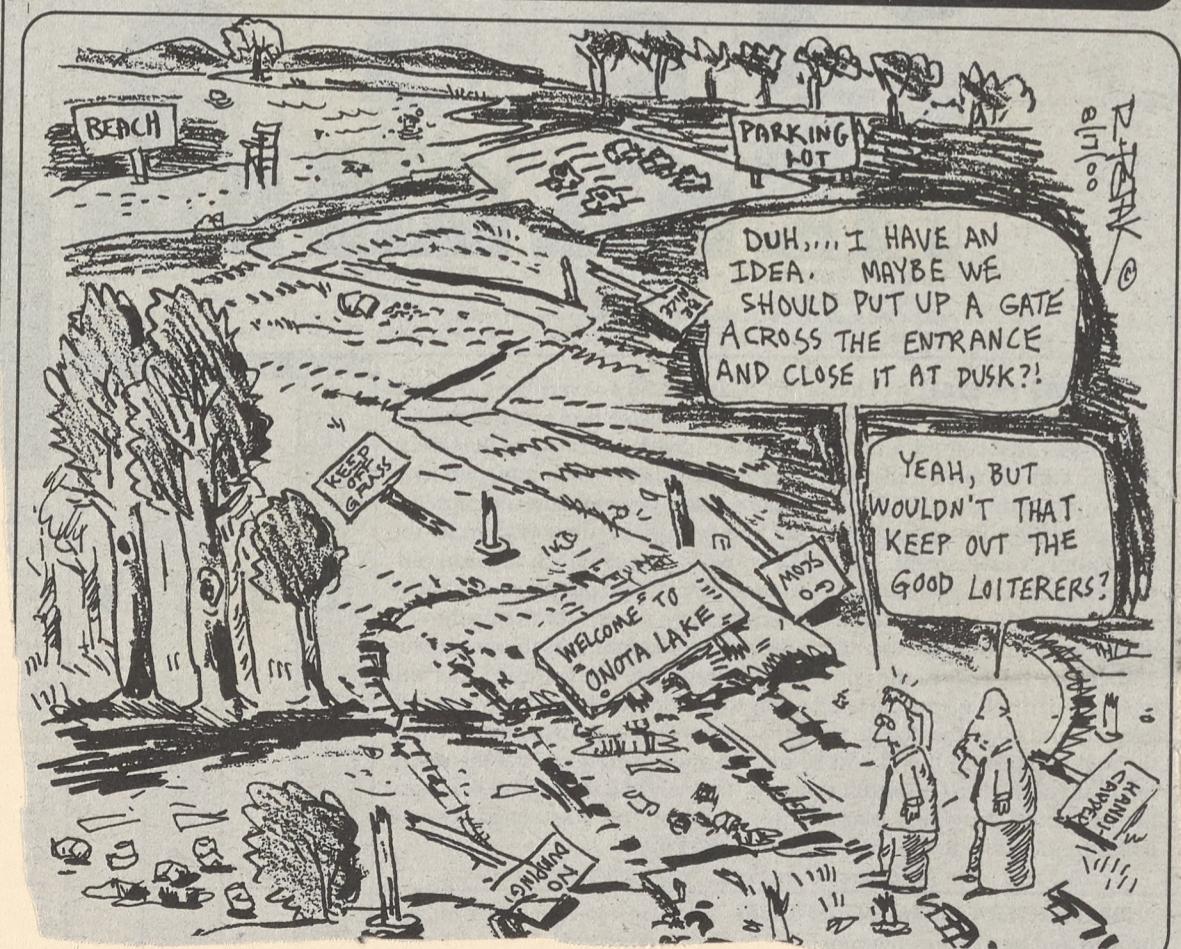
Fountain and youths

Connor Carey, 4, and his sister Shannon, 9, of Pittsfield explore the fountain at Park Square.

The Pittsfield Gazette August 17, 2000

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OPINIONS



Park Square resurfaces on municipal agenda

continued from page 1

currently has no staff engineer, he plans to solicit bids for a design within the next month. Like Doyle, Forestell believes that the best plan will be a simple one.

Forestell said that both Park Place and Bank Row would likely remain open with one-way traffic. West-bound traffic would likely flow along Park Place (the road that fronts Berkshire Bank) while eastbound traffic would flow from South Street to Bank Row and East Street.

"At this point, if that's the way we want to go, there aren't an awful lot of options there," Forestell said.

The most complicated aspect of the change would probably involve adapting traffic signals and removing traffic islands to accommodate the change, he added. The city would also have to seek state approval to amend certain traffic control agreements.

The process would involve public hearings. Forestell speculated that the idea may not be universally supported. He believes that some businesses, particularly those between Park Square and Wendell Avenue Extension, may feel that a change in traffic pattern limits access to their shops.

"I think you're going to encounter some resistance from the businesses there," Forestell said.

And even if the change is made, pedestrians will still have to cross the street to get to Park Square.

The lack of action on the project has frustrated city councilors. During the recent meeting at which the council voted in favor of modifying the traffic pattern, ward 7 councilor Joe Guzzo said he wouldn't vote for the measure again if it appeared on the agenda.

Most park commissioners apparently agree that removing the circle from Park Square is a good idea, but the board refused to endorse the concept without seeing a definitive plan.

During a meeting on Monday, the parks commission considered a request from former city councilor Pe-

ter Arlos calling for a redesign.

Arlos, who has lobbied for the change for years, noted that the city council has voted in favor of removing the traffic circle three times, including a unanimous vote earlier this month. An endorsement from the board of park commissioners, Arlos said, would help spur city officials to take action.

"[Park Square] is an enduring symbol that defines us as a city," Arlos said. "The problem is no one uses it ... there's no access. You can't get to it."

The traffic circle, Arlos said, is one of the most dangerous intersections in the region for both pedestrians and autos. Small cars compete with trailer trucks and drivers often confuse the circle with an actual rotary.

Arlos argued that a commission endorsement is incumbent in the wake of a recently completed upgrade of Park Square that cost more than \$300,000.

But board members hesitated to act without seeing a redesign plan. Chairman Robert Smith said he supported the concept, but suggesting tabling the request until a redesign plan could be reviewed.

Sue Colker said that she would not endorse the traffic change without seeing an alternative.

Arlos said that he was simply seeking park commission support of the concept, similar to the city council's vote.

The traffic redesign would be straightforward, he said, with restoration of north & south traffic along North & South streets without traversing the circle. Traffic lights could accommodate flow onto East Street.

Before the board voted, Arlos, in frustration, withdrew his petition. "[Park Square] is a historical site and its not being used," he said.

After Arlos left, board member Anthony Massimiano said that he also supports changing the traffic pattern.

"I think it's a very good idea," he said. "We certainly ought to lend our support."



A downtown group has proposed developing decorative "showcase" lighting for Park Square.

Downtown group eyes Park Square lighting

After more than \$300,000 in landscaping improvements, Park Square should be a downtown showcase both day & night, say members of Downtown Pittsfield, Inc.

Officials from the business association on Monday sought the blessing of the Parks Commission to develop a plan for permanent showcase lighting at Park Square.

Continue progress

According to Downtown Inc. board member Gary Scarafoni, the plan might include year round holiday style lighting, spotlights installed in trees or floodlights on park features, such as the Civil War statue.

Scarafoni said that the recent landscaping improvements have vastly improved the center city park. "It looks terrific," he said. "What we'd like to do is take it a step further."

Lights, Scarafoni said, would contribute to a sense of security and a spirit of festiveness. "The lights are going on in Park Square and they're never going off again," he said.

Free guidance

Scarafoni said that Dave & Jim Comalli of Comalli Electric, Inc., had volunteered to design a lighting plan at no charge. The lighting would be "subtle" and would conform with the park's historical status and with the recent renovations.

"We don't want to take away from what is there already," agreed Dave Comalli. "It would be subtle."

Downtown Inc. executive director Yvonne Pearson believes that the lighting plan could spark a trend. "Hopefully, that will encourage business owners to light up their buildings too," she said.

Park commissioners applauded the effort. Community services director Bob Mellace offered to help by supplying park blueprints and design information.

The Pittsfield Gazette October 5, 2000

Springside plans include lilac path

A "lilac walk" and the pruning of dangerous trees top the agenda of the Hebert Arboretum committee at Springside Park.

James McGrath, the volunteer group's president, outlined plans at Monday's parks commission meeting.

McGrath said the organization has prioritized four immediate projects:

- pruning and maintaining vegetation between Springside Park and North Street
- removing up to nine bushes on the Springside Lawn that are obscuring views
- removing or trimming unhealthy

Silver Maple trees at the park's entrance

- designing and implementing a "lilac walk" connecting the upper and lower park areas.

McGrath said the lilac project was proposed many years ago by the late Vin Hebert, the city's longtime parks director, for whom the arboretum is named.

"This was near and dear to his heart," said McGrath. A small lilac area has been started south of the gardens at the park's highest point.

The committee envisions creating a lilac-framed passageway to the lower area of the park.

The group plans to use donations made in Hebert's memory.

Community services director Bob Mellace said the organization's goals are consistent with the parks department's objectives.

Mellace agrees that a few trees need to be removed, though he said such actions can be controversial. "They look nice, but they're in their later years," he said. "There are some we feel should come out and others that need pruning."

McGrath said that a donor has offered free replacements trees to the arboretum group, including species better suited to the topography.

Wahconah question confirmed for November ballot in city

Voters will have an opportunity to step up to the plate — or in this case the ballot box — and voice their opinions on whether Wahconah Park should be restored for professional baseball.

Attorney General Thomas Reilly recently confirmed that a public policy question regarding Wahconah Park will appear on the November ballot. The question will read:

"Shall the state representative from this district be instructed to vote in favor of legislation that would provide state funds to upgrade and renovate Wahconah Park to meet minor league baseball franchise standards?"

Former city councilor Peter Arlos led the ballot initiative, gathering nearly 1,600 signatures. Arlos predicts that voters will eagerly support a Wahconah restoration.

"There's a bonfire out there," Arlos told the parks commission on Monday. "You know what the bonfire says? Save Wahconah Park."

High-voltage volunteers recharge park

The combined power of nearly 200 volunteers electrified Burbank Park on Saturday. Nearly every inch of the lakeside venue tells of their labor.

The General Electric Elfans — an organization comprised of current and retired GE employees — adopted Burbank Park for its annual "Share to Gain" project.

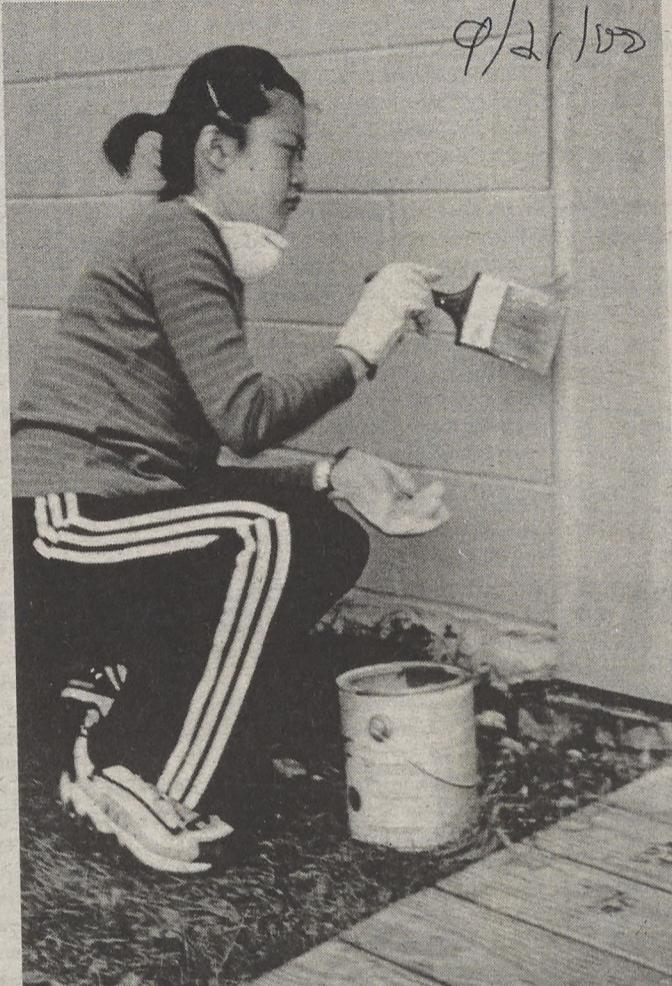
The one-day work party virtually rebuilt the Controy Pavilion, removed hundreds of bags of trash and landscaped throughout the park.

Divers snorkeled along the shoreline to remove broken glass and other debris. Volunteers also waded through brush bearing trimming shears, hauled mulch throughout the site and planted trees and shrubs.

At day's end, Burbank looked visibly healthier.

"This year, the project was unbelievable," said parks commissioner Robert Smith. "It's probably one of the most amazing things you've ever seen."

See ELFUNS page 4



Marie Tokupa, a General Electric employee who is originally from Japan, was among nearly 200 Elfans to brighten Burbank Park on Saturday.

Thursday, October 5, 2000

PCB hot spot found beside West St. park

By Jack Dew
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — About 150 feet of riverbank that runs alongside a city park is contaminated with PCBs, according to preliminary results from a state investigation into potential pollution in the West Branch of the Housatonic River.

The state Department of Environmental Protection has been sampling sediments and bank soil from the West Branch of the river for the past six weeks. Last night, at a monthly meeting of the Citizens Coordinating Council, officials announced that samples taken about six feet away from Dorothy Amos Park yielded PCBs in levels ranging from 2,300 to 8,900 parts per million. The state-permitted PCB level for residential property is 2 parts per million.

GE has asked that the deadline for cleaning up the first half-mile of the East Branch of the Housatonic River be extended until August. Page A5.

In early 1997, officials discovered PCBs in the park, which until 1973 had been the home of Perlman & Sons, a scrapyard on West Street where GE transformers were stripped and salvaged.

PCBs, or polychlorinated biphenyls, were used at GE's Pittsfield plant for decades as a spark suppressor in transformers. In 1977, the government banned the use of PCBs, which are believed to cause cancer in humans and have devastating effects on wildlife.

The bulk of the PCB contamination in the Housatonic has been detected in the East Branch, which runs through GE's former manufacturing plant, and below the point where the East and West branches meet. However, citizen groups, including the Housatonic River Initiative, have long pushed for an in-depth study of the West Branch, particularly near the park and the city's King Street dump.

"We always felt it was important to know of all the PCB pollution that is affecting the river before we started cleaning the river," said Timothy Gray, an HRI member. "There are still a number of suspect sites on the river that have not been tested. Our fear is we will clean the Housatonic, and the taxpayers chip in

part of the money for that, and someday, down the line, we will find out we did it for nothing, that the contamination will reappear."

In the spring and summer of 1998, GE removed 7,500 cubic yards of soil from Dorothy Amos Park and spent \$150,000 on renovations. The company has never said how much the actual PCB cleanup cost.

The DEP's announcement that PCBs have been found just a few feet from the remediated park sparked outrage among

PCBS, continued on A5

PCBs from A1

10/5/00

some of those attending last night's meeting. The discovery, they said, is an indication that cleanup has been rushed at the expense of detailed study of potential contamination.

"If the priority is to get these things done, then what have you overlooked to get Allendale School and residential properties done?" said Charles Cianfarini, a city resident whose property was cleaned by GE.

The DEP's studies in the West Branch were sparked by the EPA's discovery of a hot spot in the river that showed PCBs in the amount of 7,630 parts per million. While GE has agreed to reimburse the state for the cost of the testing, it has never accepted responsibility for any of the contamination found in the West

Branch of the river. A GE spokesman reiterated that position yesterday.

"The bottom line is that this is not in the part of the park where we did the cleanup. This is down in the bank and the park is safe," said Gary Sheffer, a GE spokesman. "We have agreed to do some sampling this fall to further delineate the findings, and we will continue to work with the DEP."

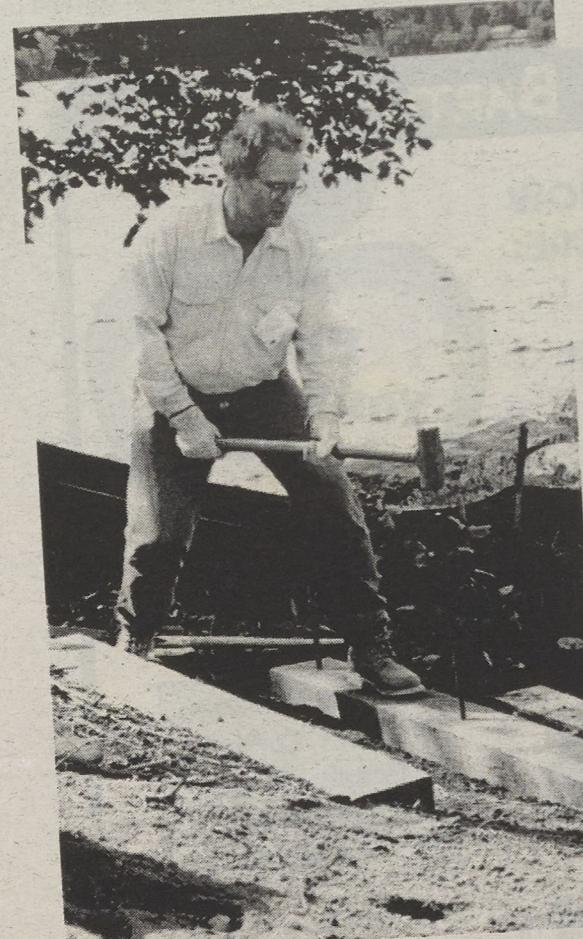
Samples of sediment in the stretch of river that runs past the park have been taken, but the DEP said the results of those tests are not in yet, and the extent of contamination in the river itself will not be fully understood until then.

"All indications right now are that this was a junkyard problem," said Alan Weinberg, deputy regional director of the DEP.

Elfuns spruce up Burbank Park



GE's Caissa McClinton helped put a fresh coat of paint on the Controy Pavilion. The pavilion, along with other sections of the park, received a major overhaul.



If I had a hammer: the area above the boat ramp received extensive attention, including installation of wooden steps.



The Elfunk crew worked all day to brighten Burbank Park.



The Controy Pavilion — often used for special events — was virtually rebuilt on Saturday by the Elfunk volunteers.

continued from page 1

Smith contacted GE officials several months ago to explore adopting Burbank for a Share-to-Gain effort. The park commission chairman had seen the Elfuns tackle other large-scale projects, including a one-day remodeling of the Kids' Place advocacy center.

The city two years ago completed a nearly \$1 million Burbank Park renewal, featuring repaved roads, parking lots and other improvements. Budget constraints, however, precluded several aspects from the original plan. The Share-to-Gain project put some significant finishing touches on the refurbishment.

"This is kind of a godsend," said Bob Mellace, director of community services. "It really completes a lot of the work we weren't able to do two years ago. Without this project, I don't know how we would have gotten it done."

The refurbishment of the Controy Pavilion served as the centerpiece of Saturday's work party. The building now features new siding, paint, weather-sealed windows and insulation.

The crew also installed a full-sized garage door in one wall of the building, allowing for easier storage and removal of supplies.

The kitchen — which had been rather gloomy — received some TLC as well, with new fixtures and paint. Outside the building, volunteers landscaped the area and installed a wooden fence.

GE's Richard Kramer, who coordinated the massive project, believes that the pavilion will serve as a more attractive and versatile building. "The idea was really to make this a year-round facility," he said.

"We really sealed it up."

Kramer said that the pavilion project proved more extensive than originally planned, since some walls were in worse shape than realized. By the end of the day on Saturday, the building looked virtually new. "It turned out even better than I thought it would," he said.

About 175 Elfunk participants participated in the Share-to-Gain project, Kramer said. Several volunteers from the community also joined in. The one-day effort took nearly three and one-half months to plan.

While most of the Elfunks are based on Pittsfield, some came from New York state to participate.

Kramer notes that the Share-to-Gain project allows GE employees, many of whom travel a great deal during the year, an opportunity to make a difference in the community.

"All-in-all, it was very successful," Kramer said. "Everybody had a lot of fun."

Another major transformation took place at the southern end of the park near the boat launch area. During the city's renewal, park officials had lamented not being able to address the former pumping station area above the boat launch, which had previously been enclosed in an ugly metal fence.

On Saturday, GE workers revamped the entire area with extensive plantings and landscaping — converting one of the least attractive areas of the park into an eye-pleasing vista.

While it is difficult to quantify a dollar value, park officials believe that the Share-to-Gain project saved the city well over \$200,000.

Three-quarters of Pittsfield voters to give opinion on Wahconah Park

By D.R. Bahlman

Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — Its chief proponent predicts that Question 10, a nonbinding referendum that will appear on most ballots in Pittsfield on Tuesday, will receive overwhelming approval.

Those who advocate a "no" vote on the question, which asks whether state Rep. Peter J. Larkin, D-Pittsfield, should "be instructed to vote in favor of legislation to provide state funds to upgrade and renovate Wahconah Park to meet minor league baseball franchise standards," say it's irrelevant to issues surrounding the future of semiprofessional baseball in the city.

Some 6,800 of the city's 28,000 registered voters — about 24 percent of Pittsfield's electorate — will not be able to vote on the question. That's because the signatures on a petition that sought its placement on the ballot were collected in the 3rd Berkshire District, which encompasses all of Pittsfield except Ward 4 and Ward

1, Precinct B.

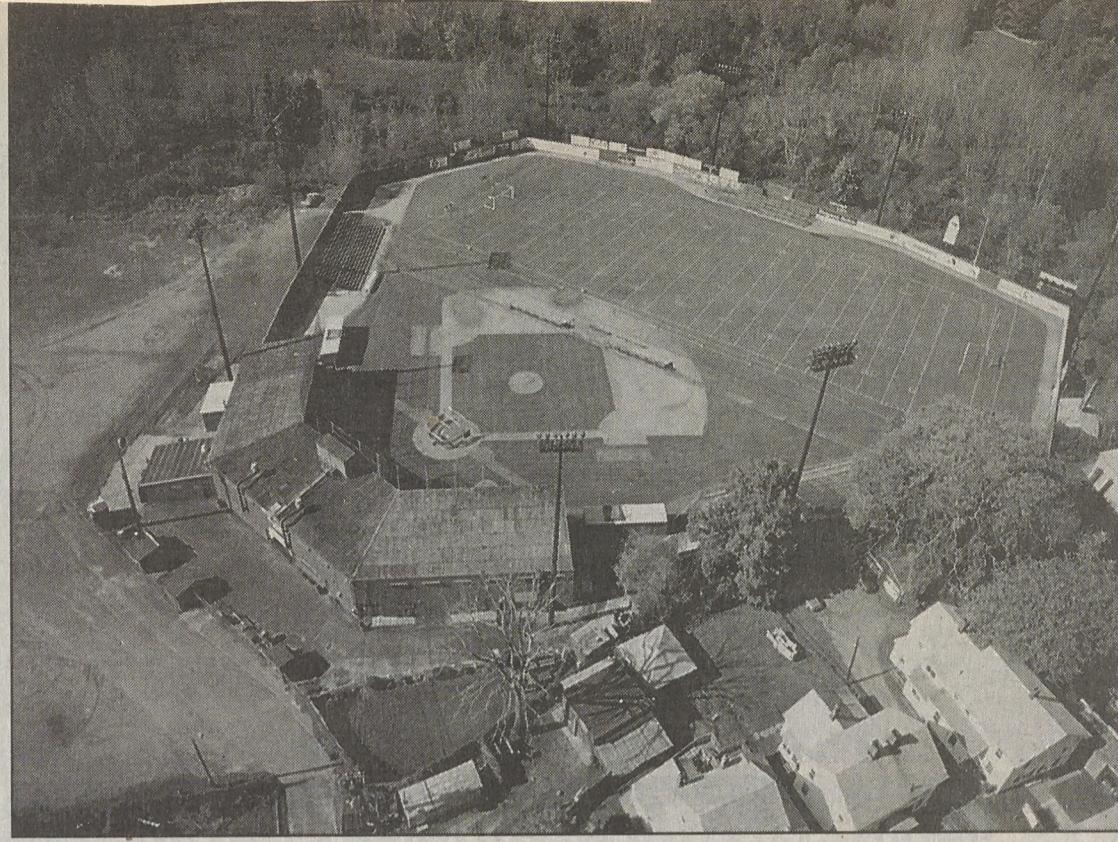
"The 3rd Berkshire District covers the area where the proposed stadium would be built," said Berkshire County Treasurer Peter G. Arlos, the question's sponsor. "Usually, one ward would indicate what people are thinking about an issue. Eighty-six percent of the citizens of Pittsfield could vote on this. We're asking 25,000 people what they think. ... This is pinpointed."

City Councilor at large Matthew M. Kerwood disagrees.

"I think that the wording of the question does not address the issue of building a new stadium," he said. "... Minor league baseball has made it very clear that they will not play at Wahconah Park, whether it's renovated or not. We should certainly look at it as a community asset — nobody wants to turn the lights off there — but the question doesn't deal with the current situation."

Kerwood also observed that the opinions of many voters in Pittsfield will go unrecorded.

He added that placement of the question on ballots in other representative districts would have placed an unfair burden on town clerks, who would be required to count ballots dealing with a question that has no direct relevance to their communities.



Ben Garver / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Question 10, which would direct the legislator who represents the 3rd Berkshire District to seek state funding to upgrade Wahconah Park to minor league standards, will appear on the ballot in Pittsfield Ward 1, Precinct A, and in Wards 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7.



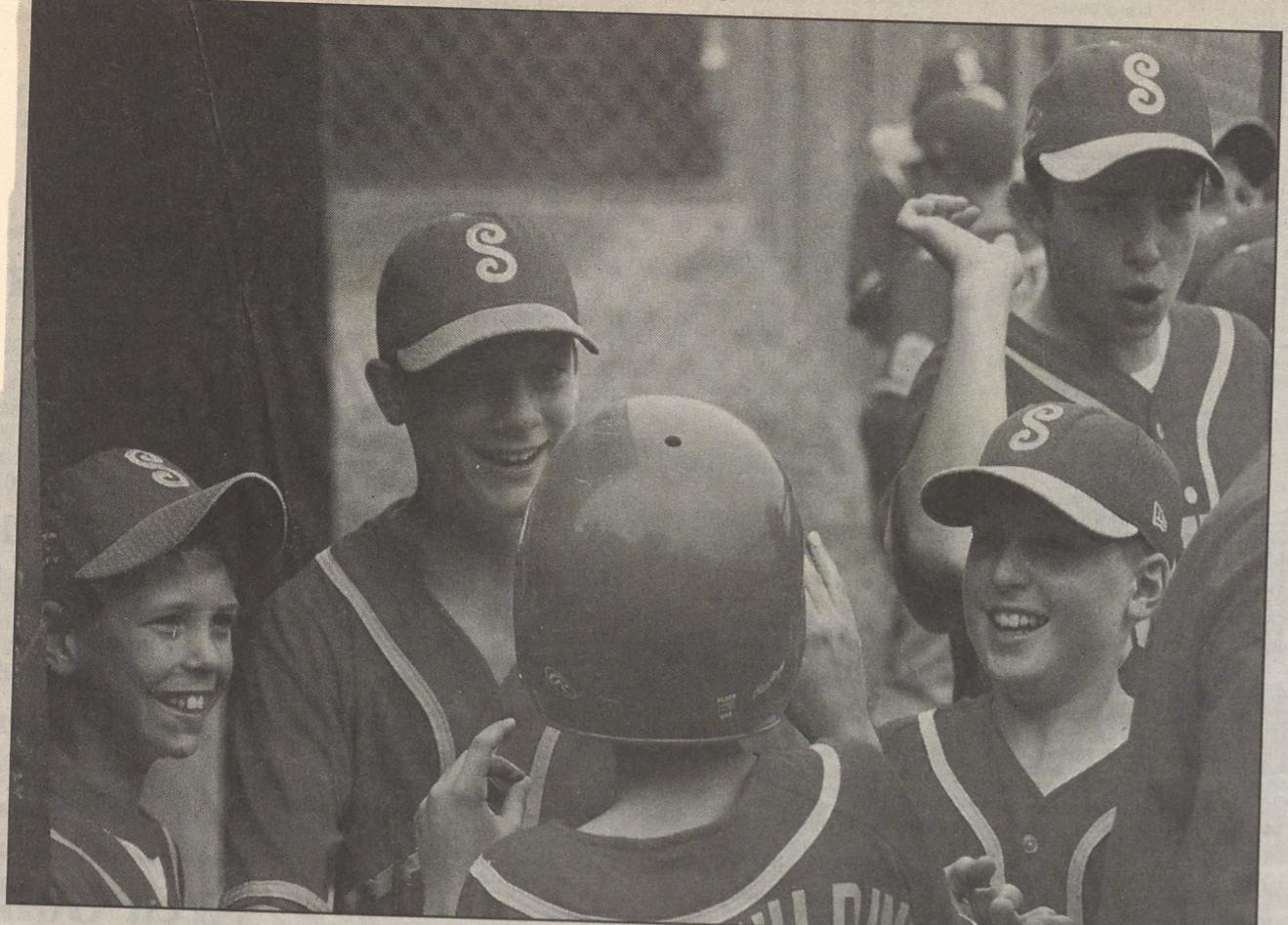
Shannon DeCelle / Berkshire Eagle Staff

11/3/00

Jungle crawlers

As the sun begins to dip in the sky behind them, 11-year-old Tim Vrabel and his sister, Kathleen, climb along the centipede jungle gym at Springside Park in Pittsfield last week.

East Lynn 4, Pittsfield South 1



Members of the Pittsfield South all-star team celebrate a run during Wednesday's 8-0 victory over Middleboro. Greeting teammate Tim Burns (with helmet) were, from left, Chris McLaughlin, Joey Flynn, Jeff Fields and David Glass. Pittsfield, however, was defeated last night, 4-1, by East Lynn and now must win three consecutive games to earn a state championship.

South faces huge challenge

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

BEVERLY — The margin for error is now paper thin. The Pittsfield South all-star Little League team was defeated by East Lynn 4-1 last night at Harry Ball Field, and now must win three straight games if it hopes to claim a state championship.

Using an array of off-speed pitches combined with a sneaky fastball, East Lynn southpaw Chris Carroll whiffed 10 of Pittsfield's finest to thrust the city team into the loser's bracket of the four-team tournament.

Pittsfield plays Middleboro today at 4, the loser being eliminated from postseason play. The winner will face East Lynn tomorrow and need to win twice.

"We just weren't into it tonight, and I could tell the minute the kids got here," said South manager Joe Skutnik. "We made some mistakes tonight, and we'd only done that in one other game. Tonight, we didn't get away

with it."

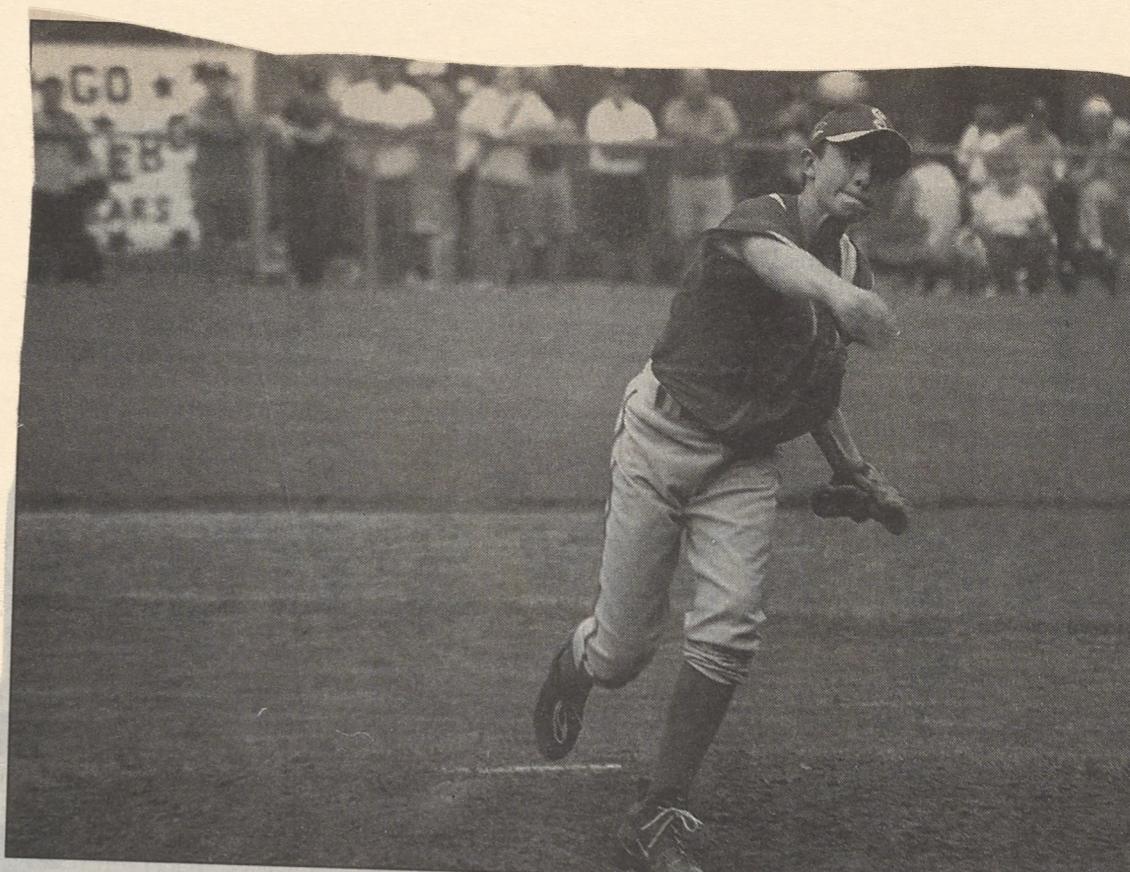
Pittsfield South, now 7-1 in postseason, entered the state finals as the lone team of the four not to have lost a game along the way. But the crafty Carroll and veteran East Lynn squad that returned seven players from last year's team brought that streak to an end.

Lynn wasted little time getting on the board, scoring once in the opening inning. With one out, David Kolozetski reached on an infield hit and went to second when Pittsfield South hurler Dan Haddad hit Mark Anthony Williams.

Cory Moore followed with a base hit to load the bases. Matt Pruner then drew a walk to force in Kolozetski. Haddad avoided further trouble by striking out Shawn Coogan and Jairo Valdez to end the inning.

East Lynn took advantage of a pair of rare Pittsfield mis-

SOUTH, continued on C3



Pittsfield South all-star pitcher David Glass delivers to the plate in the team's opening-round 8-0 win over Middleboro on Wednesday night.

South from C1

cues to add two more runs in the second. With one out, Justin Narducci reached on a bunt single and went to second on a wild pitch. Carroll followed with an infield hit, and kept right on running to second while Narducci was hit by a pitch to open the inning, and Dan Murphy followed with an infield hit. Burns never stopped running on the play, and came all the way around to score when the attempted throw to get him at third was off line.

That would be all Pittsfield could muster though, as Carroll retired the next three hitters.

Carroll made a wide turn around second and drew a throw from Pittsfield catcher Brendan Burke, who fired to shortstop Chad Brown.

But Brown fell to his knees on the wet turf, and Narducci scampered home. Haddad fanned Kolozetski, but following the third strike, Burke attempted to pick off Carroll at third, and the throw sailed into left field.

"These kids know that we have to be aggressive to score runs, and we do what we have to," said East Lynn manager Jim Kolozetski. "We've got a pretty veteran team, and we had pretty high hopes for them. So far, they're living up to those hopes."

Pittsfield struck for its only run in the home second. Tim Burns was hit by a pitch to open the inning, and Dan Murphy followed with an infield hit. Burns never stopped running on the play, and came all the way around to score when the attempted throw to get him at third was off line.

That would be all Pittsfield could muster though, as Carroll retired the next three hitters.

Carroll then hit Nick Bianchi and Burns to load the bases. But Carroll earned a strikeout to end the threat.

"Chris hasn't hit three kids all year, but he was really slipping on the mound until they came out and fixed it," said Jim Kolozetski. "He really settled down after that."

Haddad also settled down nicely after the tough start, and retired seven of the next eight hitters he faced before East Lynn scored a single run in the fourth on a two-out single by Kolozetski.

East Lynn also threatened in the fifth when they loaded the bases with no outs, but Haddad came back to shut the door without allowing a run.

Haddad allowed 10 hits and struck out 10 in a gutsy effort.

"Danny settled down and pitched real well, and battled the whole way," said Skutnik, who has yet to decide on who will take the mound today, but emphasized that it would not be ace David Glass.

Faced now with the prospect of having to play and win three games in the next two days, Skutnik isn't quite sure what to expect from his team.

"If we were home, I know we'd bounce back, but because we're on the road, I'm not sure. I can't tell you how we're going to respond. Knowing my team, I think they'll be ready. They might not show it right away, but I'm pretty confident they'll be ready."

P-South's great run is over

Big 1st inning keys victory by Old Lyme, Conn.

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

BRISTOL, Conn. — A Little League field can be a great place for learning. For the Pittsfield South All-Stars, it's been that and a whole lot more. But on a cold and damp night at Breen Field, the Pittsfield nine learned a lesson they hoped wouldn't come so soon.

In a game delayed three hours at the start by rain, hometown favorite Old Lyme of Connecticut scored five unearned runs in the first inning. Old Lyme kept the Massachusetts champions at bay the rest of the way to post a 6-1 win in a Little League Northeast Pool semifinal round game. The Little Red Machine came into last night's game knowing that one loss meant elimination from the tournament.

Did rain hurt?

"I don't think the delay was a factor. We were ready to play," said South manager Joe Skutnik, whose team finished with a record of 14-3. "We hit the ball hard, but Old Lyme made the plays in the field."

"If somebody had said to me six weeks ago that we would be playing in the Eastern Regional, with three wins separating us from a trip to Williamsport, I would've said no way. We had a great ride."

Last night's game was a rematch of a contest in pool play that Pittsfield lost 3-2. In that first game, Old Lyme's Mike Neaton outdueled Pittsfield's Dan Haddad.

"I think we might have lost our concentration a bit with the delay," said South pitcher/first baseman David Glass, who went 7-0 in the tournament. "We had a tough first inning, and that ended up costing us. This was still a lot of fun and something I won't forget for a long time. Hopefully, we can do it again next year as 13-year-olds in Babe Ruth."

Old Lyme moves on and will play the winner of today's game between Lincoln, R.I., and Goffstown, N.H., at 5 for the right to advance to the regional championship on Thursday. The Lincoln-Goffstown game was postponed until this morning because of yesterday's rain.

Throughout the tournament, Pittsfield South had

been able to keep its opponents from getting a big inning. Yesterday, however, Old Lyme put five runs on the board on just one hit, two errors, two walks and a hit batter.

A leadoff walk

Pittsfield starter Dan Haddad opened the game by walking Ryan Zrenda. Brian Moore reached on an error and Rob Neaton was hit by a pitch to load the bases. Mike Neaton's bouncer forced Zrenda at the plate for the first out.

Moore scored the first run of the game on a Haddad wild pitch. Jim Harrigan walked to load the bases. After Kyle Quintin struck out, Conner Zito blooped a single into right field that scored the Neaton brothers, and Harrigan went to third.

Jim Gleason singled home Harrigan and sent Zito to third. Gleason broke for second, and Zito raced home with the final run of the inning when the throw went to

SOUTH, continued on C3

South from C1

second.

Pittsfield, which had only four hits against Mike Neaton, left two runners on base in the first inning but broke through for its only run in the third.

Chad Brown opened the inning with an infield hit. David Glass ripped a drive up the middle that Neaton got a glove on, and he fired to second for the force-out.

Neaton fanned the next hitter, but Tim Burns lifted a double just inside the left-field line, and Glass went to third. Joey Flynn's RBI single up the middle to score Glass, but Burns was thrown out trying to score to end the inning.

"We got out of that first-inning jam and took advantage of a few breaks to get those runs in the first inning, and that was very big for us," said Old Lyme manager Brad Moore.

"Then, Frank Hamilton makes a great throw in center field to cut that runner down at the plate. That was a pivotal play, because even with a five-run lead, I wasn't feeling too confident. Pittsfield South is a very tough team, and we saw in their game with Vermont that they can come back when they have to."

Old Lyme got that run back in the bottom of the inning when Harrigan singled and later scored on a sacrifice fly by Zito.

"Mike pitched another great

game for us and did the job against their big hitters," said Moore. "We took advantage of the opportunities we had. This was a great team effort."

South did have base runners in each of the final two innings, but Neaton retired the next two hitters in order. He went the distance and struck out three.

"The last time [the teams played], Neaton struck out 10, so we did a much better job of putting our bats on the ball," said Skutnik. "The ball just bounced their way, but that's baseball."

Haddad pitched 5 1/3 innings and struck out seven. John Skutnik finished up, retiring both the hitters he faced.

Despite the ride coming to an end, not a coach, player or parent was distraught after the game.

"We wanted to play Connecticut again — and we know that we can beat them — but we just didn't do it today," said Joe Bastow. "No Pittsfield team has ever won three games in the Regional, and we did that. This was one great time."

"I don't think these kids will realize what they've done until they get home and have a few days to think about it," said Skutnik.

"Since the state tournament, this has been such a whirlwind that you don't have a minute to just sit back and realize where you're at. I'm sure in time that all of these kids will feel very good about what they've done."



In preparation for Thursday's game in the Little League Eastern Regionals, Pittsfield South coach Ty Perrault, center, goes over the scouting report with pitcher Dan Haddad, left, and catcher Brendan Burke. While Pittsfield South lost on Thursday, the club bounced back yesterday with an 11-2 win over Auburn Suburban of Maine.

Pittsfield South rolls

Hitting and defense key to win over Maine

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

BRISTOL, Conn. — In the opening round game in the Eastern Regional Little Tournament on Monday, Pittsfield South manager Joe Skutnik knew that pitcher David Glass was going to have to carry the majority of the load. The fireballing right-hander did just that, pitching a one-hitter for the Little Red Machine's 2-0 win over Lincoln, Rhode Island.

Yesterday, on the heels of a tough 3-2 loss to Old Lyme, Conn. the night before, a not 100 percent Glass needed help from his teammates. He got it, and more.

Backed by stellar defensive plays from third baseman Joe Bastow and right-fielder Dan Murphy, along with clutch hitting from John Skutnik, Kris McLaughlin and Brian Barber, South rolled to an 11-2 win over Auburn Suburban of Maine yesterday at Breen Field.

'Red Machine' now 2-1

With the win, Pittsfield improved to 2-1 in Northeast pool play and moved to within a win of assuring itself a spot in the top four finish. A top-four finish would send the local nine into elimination play beginning on Monday.

"I knew we'd be flat today, and I understand why," said South manager Joe Skutnik, whose team will face Brat-

tleboro, Vt. tonight at 8. "Playing in front of 1,500 fans last night in an intense game took a lot of out of these kids. All of these kids have contributed in some way since day one, and today kids like John and Kris took advantage of chance to start to help out. I'm happy for all of them."

Leadoff triple by pitcher

Glass, who allowed five hits and struck out nine, opened the game by ripping a triple to right off Maine starter David Lutz. Glass finished with four of his team's 14 hits. Brendan Burke followed with a ground ball to short that was misplayed, allowing Glass to score.

After getting another run in the top of the second inning on an RBI ground out by Dan Haddad, South added three more runs in the fourth. McLaughlin and Skutnik each had base hits in the inning and Jeff Fields drove in a run.

Maine scored both their runs in the bottom of the second, the first runs allowed by Glass since the third inning of the Sectional Final against Jesse Burkett of Worcester, a span of 24 innings.

Auburn's Nathan Guerette opened the inning with a base hit and went to third on a single by Tyler Dorris. Kyle Giguere reached on a fielder's choice to load the bases. Glass

SOUTH, continued on C3

South from C1 8/12/00

walked Garner LaValley to force home a run. Giguere was forced out at the plate on Aaron Boothbay's bunt, and Jacob Maran fanned for the second out. Lutz followed with a one-hopper that Bastow snared and stepped on the bag for the final out of the inning.

In the bottom of the fifth, the South defense again rose to the occasion. First Murphy made a shoestring catch on a line drive off the bat of Brady Blackman. Guerette followed with a line shot that Bastow somehow snared.

"That might have been the play that finally picked us up," said Skutnik of Murphy's catch. "That was a big, big play."

"I thought that ball was going to take his head off," said Glass of Bastow's catch. "These guys just did a great job of making the plays, not to mention hitting the ball."

Buoyed by those two defensive gems, South came in and had the biggest inning of the tournament, scoring six runs on seven hits in the top of the sixth. Burke had an RBI double and RBI single in the inning, while Barber, Chard Brown and Glass also had runs

scoring hits.

"Since I moved up in the order, I've been hitting the ball a lot better," said Burke, who has moved from the eighth to second spot in the order. "Seeing Kris and John get those hits was good, because they aren't getting too many at bats lately. It picked not only them up, but us too."

"It was those kids turn to get a shot and I think they feel good about contributing," added Skutnik. "It took us a little while to get started, but once we did, we were fine. We need one of the next two and we'll be playing on Monday."



Tom Ryan / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Pittsfield South pitcher David Glass, top left, congratulates left-fielder Nick Bianchi, bottom, after making a catch to end the fourth inning yesterday. Also pictured is Joe Bastow.

South from C1

was right on the outside corner and I went with it."

"We hit some pretty good down in Beverly, but the heavy air knocked them down," said Skutnik. "A few of those could have gone out. Not having hit for the past two days was a big factor. We hit all right in the cage this morning, we'll be right back in their later today and again tomorrow."

Glass and the other Pittsfield South pitchers, Dan Haddad and Jeff Fields, have pitched 21 consecutive scoreless innings.

"I knew our pitching would have to carry us today, and it did," the South manager added.

After that first inning, Glass buckled down in a big way. He retired the final 16 hitters Rhode Island hitters in order.

"Because this was the first game, and not knowing anything about Rhode Island, Ty [assistant coach Ty Perrault] decided to have David throw breaking stuff than he usually does," said Joe

Little League Results

New Hampshire def. Maine 6-0.
New Jersey def. Rhode Island 1-0.
Pennsylvania def. D.C. 2-0.
Connecticut def. Vermont 9-4.

Skutnik after the game. There were a few situations where we normally would've had David throw the fastball, but today we didn't know enough. Today, the biggest key was that David only walked the one batter."

Surprised by K's

"I'm surprised that I'm striking out more people now than I was in the districts," said Glass, who was pitching for the third time in the last seven days. "I thought there would be less, but I think I'm getting stronger."

Rhode Island manager Lou Abraham was equally impressed with the performance of Glass.

"We had some pretty good cuts at his fastball early, but then he started throwing off speed stuff, and it made him even tougher,"

said Abraham, who has two returnees from last year's team. "I'll tell you one thing. He's very good, and by far the best we've seen since the district tournament started."

As is getting to be the custom, South again came up with big defensive play to keep the shutout intact.

With one out in the fourth, Borden hit a towering drive that appeared to be heading for the left field bleachers. But Nick Bianchi got a great jump on the ball, and pulled it in just before the ball would've gone over the fence.

"I knew Nick had that, my defense has been backing me up the whole tournament," said Glass, who has allowed a total of four hits in his last three starts and struck out 27 batters.

"We know we need at least three wins to move on, and that's really all I'm worried about at this point," said Skutnik. "As long as we finish in the top four in the pool, it doesn't matter to me whether we're fourth or first."

P-South rallies in 6th to win



Pittsfield South's Joe Flynn takes a rip at a pitch during Friday's 11-2 win over Auburn, Maine.

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

BRISTOL, Conn. — The mission was pretty simple for Pittsfield South — win the game and advance to elimination-round play tomorrow.

The Little Red Machine scored four runs in the bottom of the sixth inning, turning a 3-0 deficit into a 4-3 victory over Brattleboro, Vt., in the Little League Eastern Regional last night.

Brian Barber and Tim Burns opened the home sixth inning with consecutive singles, knocking Brattleboro starter Jake Cote out of the game. Joe Flynn reached on an error to load the bases.

Joe Bastow's infield hit off losing pitcher Cory Chamberlin made it 1-0. Burns was thrown out at home on a fielder's choice, then Kris McLaughlin's single plated Flynn, making it 3-2. David Glass singles to right, tying the score. Brendan Burke's infield single on an 0-2 count scored Bastow with the game-winning run.

Pittsfield South pitcher Jeff Fields gave up 10 hits and struck out nine to get the win. With the win, Pittsfield is now 3-1 in pool play, as are both Old Lyme, Conn. and Goffstown, New Hampshire. Goffstown beat Old Lyme 2-1 yesterday afternoon to hand the home state team its first loss. Earlier

South from C1

in the day, Lincoln, R.I. beat Auburn Suburban, Maine 2-1 eliminating Auburn.

Pittsfield South will play Goffstown at 12:30 today and Old Lyme will take on Lincoln, Rhode Island at 5:30. Those four teams are the top finishers in the Northeast Pool, but their exact order of finish will not be determined until after today's games are completed. In the event that more than two teams finish with identical records, a runs-allowed formula is used.

8/13/00

SOUTH, continued on C3

Smooth as Glass



Pittsfield South players storm out of the dugout to congratulate David Glass (10) after his two-run home run in the third inning of yesterday's Eastern Regional Little League Tournament opener at Bristol, Conn. Pittsfield South scored a 2-0 win over Lincoln, R.I.

Pittsfield South wins LL opener in Bristol, Conn.

By Tom Ryan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

BRISTOL, Conn. — Because of bad weather and a hectic schedule the past two days, the Pittsfield South Little League team had little time to do any hitting. Yesterday morning in the opening game in the Eastern Regional Tournament at the A. Bartlett Giamatti Eastern Little League Training and Leadership Center, the lack of activity showed.

The local nine had only two hits. One of those hits was the difference in the game.

Winning pitcher got key hit

David Glass hit a two-out, two-run homer in the bottom of the third inning and tossed a one-hitter and struck out 12 to lead South to a 2-0 win over Lincoln, Rhode Island at Breen Field.

"In our minds, this first game was a must win," said Pittsfield manager Joe Skutnik, whose team will return to action tomorrow night when it plays Connecticut champion Old Lyme at 8 p.m. "Playing in the first game of the whole tournament, you want to make a good showing. Now we've got the better part of the next two days off. That will give us time to see the other teams and get in the cage."

Lincoln, the defending Rhode Island champion, only had two base runners in the entire game. Both of them were in the first inning.

After Glass retired the first two hitters, Scott Cardin lofted a fly ball that fell in and was scored a double. Glass then issued his only walk of the game to Kyle Borden, but then came back to strike out Kyle Milbrandt to end the inning.

Lincoln starter Steve Soucy, who had not allowed a run in his last two starts, retired the first six South hitters in order before Joe Bastow opened the third inning with a base hit to center field. Bastow moved to second on a wild pitch, but Soucy bore down and struck out the next two hitters, bringing Glass to the plate. On the first pitch, Glass went out and drove a fastball over the 10-foot high fence in right-center to snap the shutout.

"I realize that things have been going to pretty good for me lately, but I've been wanting to hit one out for awhile," said Glass, whose blast was the first for a South player since the county title win over Dalton. "When I hit it, I thought it might hit the top of the fence. [The pitch]

SOUTH, continued on C3

Swift: State may help fund park

'The state has demonstrated its ability to support successful projects in this part of the state. We would follow the city's lead if the city were to make a proposal. At this point, the city has yet to make a proposal.'

- Lt. Gov. Swift

By Greg Sukiennik
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — Lt. Gov. Jane M. Swift said Wednesday night the state would "follow the city's lead" on plans for a refurbished Wahconah Park or a new outdoor stadium.

Swift, attending the Pittsfield Mets game with her extended family, said she was aware of concerns expressed by the city and the club about the future of minor league baseball in Pittsfield.

"The state has demonstrated its ability to support successful projects in this part of the state," Swift said. "We would follow the city's lead if the city were to make a proposal. At this point, the city has yet to make a proposal."

Asked how the state might help the city pay for a new or substantially improved facility, Swift said there are a number of programs the city could take advantage of, "programs that the city has

successfully used in the past."

Told of Swift's statement yesterday, Mayor Gerald S. Doyle Jr. said, "If there are funds available, rest assured I will do everything in my power to get them."

Late last week, National Pastime Co. President William Gladstone warned that the condition of Wahconah Park might limit his ability to attract a new affiliation for the 2001 season. The club's player development contract with the New York Mets will end after the 2000 season, and Gladstone does not expect that the Mets will renew.

While Doyle has promoted improvements to the park rather than full-scale reconstruction, he has said he would push for a new facility if he had a long-term commitment from a franchise. He has also bemoaned the lack of state support for such a facility.

Meanwhile, minor league baseball and hockey teams in Springfield and Lowell have benefited, or will likely benefit,

from state-funded facility improvements.

Doyle, whose efforts to secure funding for a park were foiled in 1998, voiced some curiosity about what had changed lawmakers' minds about using state money to build stadiums.

"When we hired a consultant and did a site study, we were told point-blank by [House Speaker] Thomas Finneran that the answer was 'no,'" Doyle said, adding that the policy apparently changed when it came to Lowell and Springfield. "I need to know what changed, and our community development office will follow up."

Swift, her husband, Charles Hunt, their infant daughter Elizabeth, and Swift's parents, Jack and Jean Swift, were seated in the grandstand along the first base line for Wednesday night's game, along with a few members of

SWIFT, continued on B4

City makes Park pledge

In exchange for state monies, the city has agreed to restrictions intended to preserve the historical quality of Park Square.

Councilors voted 10-0 Tuesday to accept the agreement, which was previously endorsed by the parks commission.

The "preservation restriction agreement" is required as part of a \$140,000 grant from the state historical commission.

According to community services director Bob Mellace, who has overseen the Park Square rehabilitation project, "the restriction is established to ensure the preservation of those characteristics which contribute to the architectural and historical integrity of Park Square."

Mellace said that the restrictions — to be recorded at registry of deeds — prevent alterations to the park "which would significantly alter the historical or architectural character of the premises."

In response to a question from at-large councilor Paul Dowd, Mellace stated that after accepting the restriction, the city would need to get approval from the state historical commission before making further changes at the site.

4/13/00

Swift from B1

Swift's staff. The North Adams native threw out the first pitch, and then took her seat with her daughter, who was sporting a miniature Red Sox cap.

Swift's trip back home Wednesday night had been planned for some time. But as fortune would have it, the lieutenant governor's

schedule took her away from the Boston media storm swirling around a pleasure cruise taken by Massport Director Peter Blute, and Blute's resulting resignation.

The so-called "booze cruise," in which Blute and Republican lobbyist Alexander "Sandy" Tennant leased a boat with Massport funds and spent Tuesday afternoon boating and drinking with friends, led to Blute resigning and

the Massachusetts Republican Party cutting all ties with Tennant.

8/20/99

With Gov. Paul Cellucci in Florida, Swift was besieged by the media for reaction to the resignation on Wednesday.

Asked if the situation had unleashed her renowned temper, Swift said no. "Gov. Cellucci was mad enough for both of us."

Commission OK's creche

By D.R. Bahelman
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — For the third consecutive year, a Pittsfield man's request to place a nativity scene in Park Square on Christmas Day has been granted.

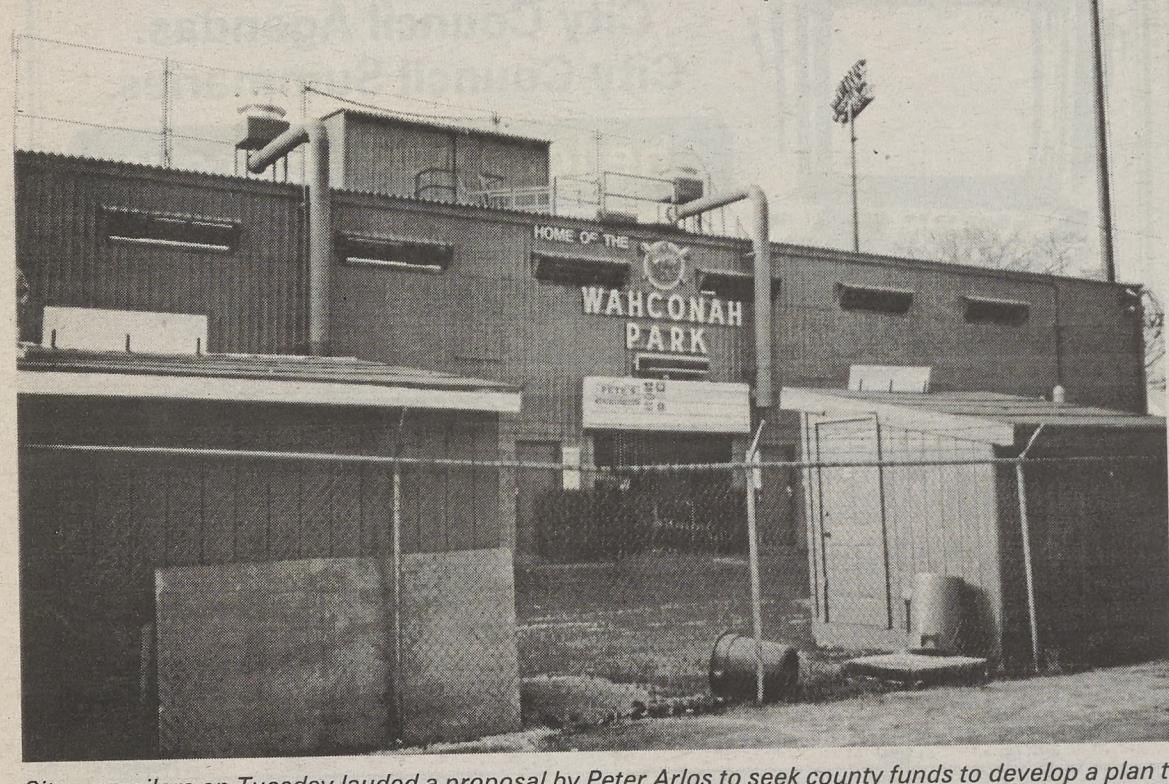
The Park Commission on Monday approved Jon Papa's application to display the creche. A condition of the approval is that the creche be placed in Park Square no earlier than 7 a.m. on Christmas Day and be removed no later than 5 p.m. on Christmas.

In 1998, Papa's request to display a creche in the park during the Christmas season sparked controversy. Concluding that it was legally empowered to regulate the time, place and manner of such a display, the commission said Papa could place it in Park Square on Christmas Day only.

In other business, the commission set the annual Park Square holiday tree-lighting ceremony for Dec. 1 at 7 p.m. The tree, which was grown in Pittsfield, will be transported to Park Square and erected there on Nov. 16 by Petricca Construction Co. The company will donate its time and equipment, said Robert S. Mellace, the city's director of community services.

10/10/00

Councilors support seeking funds for Wahconah Park study



City councilors on Tuesday lauded a proposal by Peter Arlos to seek county funds to develop a plan to improve Wahconah Park.

Remedies proposed for crimes at Common

The council's public safety subcommittee will review a proposal to increase police patrols at the First Street Common, enhance lighting at the park and explore using surveillance cameras.

Ward 2 councilor James Brassard suggested the new measures in response to recent violence at the facility.

"If we don't talk about it, nothing will be done," said Brassard.

Ward 5 councilor Rick Scapin noted that enhanced lighting at Clapp Park has "worked well." At-large councilor Matt Kerwood said that safety issues should be reviewed for all city parks. "It's not just the Common," he said.

Councilors voted unanimously Tuesday to refer Brassard's petition to the subcommittee.

6/4/00

Is there a future for a renovated Wahconah Park as a site for minor league baseball and other events?

Members of the city council's finance subcommittee believe that the possibility should be considered. The panel on Tuesday unanimously supported a petition submitted by former councilor Peter Arlos calling on the city to seek \$50,000 in county funds to hire a consultant to develop a plan for a Wahconah upgrade.

Arlos suggested that a consultant develop a "five year plan" to incrementally improve Wahconah Park to meet the standards of modern professional baseball. The former councilor said that the venerable park is well-loved in Berkshire County and throughout the nation. He noted that Wahconah has been celebrated in publications such as "Baseball Digest."

"It's the best-known minor league ball park in America," he said.

A private sector partnership, led by the Berkshire Eagle, is hoping to build a multi-use facility off West Street at the site of the former Falcon Chevrolet auto dealership — a concept being championed by Mayor Gerald Doyle, Jr. The facility would potentially host minor league baseball, as well as other sports and entertainment events.

Arlos said on Tuesday that he is "all for" the partnership developing a new stadium, but believes renovating Wahconah would be in the city's best interest. The location being considered by the Eagle, he said, features "a bog" and the businesses surrounding the proposed site could be far more expensive than expected to obtain.

"You won't see [a new stadium], at the quickest 5 to 10 years," he said. "Meanwhile, we should stay competitive ... upgrade Wahconah Park and develop a plan to do it."

Ward 6 councilor Dan Bianchi supported the study. "I feel the same way about Wahconah Park," he said. "It is a really well-known park."

Arlos said that "surplus" funds are available in the county's budget and that several other cities and towns have secured grants. Abrogation of Berkshire county government will take place in July.

City council president Tom Hickey noted that county advisory board decisions are based on a "weighted" vote, with the city of Pittsfield controlling 28 percent. This bodes well for the city winning the grant, he said. "I think this is a good idea to try for this," he said.

Arlos had initially petitioned the city to ask for \$25,000 but the subcommittee amended the proposal to ask for \$50,000 to conduct a more comprehensive study.

The full city council will consider the measure on Tuesday.

Meetings set on Pittsfield parks, lands

PITTSFIELD — The city's five-year plan for its recreational areas and open spaces will be the subject of public meetings on March 20 and April 3.

The March 20 meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. at Conte Community School; the April 3 meeting will be held at 7 p.m. at Williams School.

Prepared by the city's Department of Community Development and the Department of Community Services, the plan helps guide the allocation of resources to the city's public recreational facilities.

Comments from city residents help planners get a clearer picture of what facilities, services and programs to make available at Pittsfield's parks, lakes and open spaces, said Robert S. Mellace, the city's director of community services.

An updated plan also improves the city's chances of obtaining grant funding for parks.

3/16/00